AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
OCT - 5 1988

September 5, 1988

For immediate release

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Large inventories affecting poultry prices and quotas

Large inventories of chicken and turkey meat will be keeping the lid on prices and quotas for Alberta poultry producers, at least until the end of the year, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

While there is possibility of some price hikes because of cost of production increases, David Oke says it will be sometime before demand has much influence on higher prices.

Oke, a dairy and poultry analyst with the department's market analysis branch in Edmonton, made his comments in the recently released chicken, turkey and egg situation and outlook quarterly report.

Although chicken consumption is at a record high level across the country, it hasn't been enough to reduce the large stocks of meat in Alberta, he says.

In Alberta where chicken stocks are higher than elsewhere in Canada, the Alberta Chicken Producers Marketing Board will cut production quotas by a further 10 per cent beginning in September. That's the second 10 per cent cut in the past three months.

Oke says Alberta producers who were allowed to produce 110 per cent of quota earlier this year will be limited to 90 per cent of quota this fall.

Although chicken production is being restricted, producers have seen some relief as the marketing board has raised prices to producers this year. Higher feed prices were cited as the major factor.

Oke says with the most recent price increases in August, broiler chickens (under 2.3 kilograms in weight) are worth $1.19 a kilogram to producers this fall compared to $1.12 a kilogram a year ago.

Looking at the egg market, the specialist says nationally there has been a 3.5 per cent drop in consumption which has resulted in a two per cent cut in production quotas.

Oke says industry sources suggest reduced consumption of eggs has resulted from concern by consumers over the amount of cholesterol in their diets, and a reaction to reports of salmonella bacteria being found in eggs in parts of the United States.

(Cont'd)

He stresses that no bacteria have been found in Canadian eggs.

Although on the Canadian scene there will be production cutbacks, Alberta will actually see a very minor quota increase of 0.35 per cent in January 1989.

Higher production costs caused by higher grain prices were again cited as the reason for a five cent a dozen increase to producers July 31.

A flood of turkey meat brought into Alberta in April from Quebec by a major retailer has contributed to a near record second-quarter supply situation for Alberta turkey meat.

Oke says the Quebec turkey had a double-barrelled impact on Alberta turkey meat sales. On one hand it was extra meat coming into a province which already had a high inventory and on the other it affected the promotion of Alberta turkey meat products.

The out-of-province meat was sold at prices which other retailers could not or did not match and consequently their purchases of Alberta-grown turkey declined.

"This type of inward movement of turkey meat does not show up in the provincial statistics," says Oke. "The result was a rapid increase in the level of stocks and an extremely low level of disappearance of Alberta products."

Figures show consumption of Alberta-grown turkey meat from April to June was down about 47 per cent from a year ago.

The economist says in spite of the setback, the industry expects the large Alberta turkey inventory will be substantially reduced during the peak Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.

He says no price increases for producers are expected before the end of the year.

For more details or a copy of the chicken, egg and turkey situation and outlook contact David Oke in Edmonton at 427-5382.

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Contact: David Oke
427-5382

Rats aren't pets under Alberta law

Unless you are a scientific researcher or a registered zoo keeper it's illegal to own or possess a rat in the province of Alberta.

A specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton says anyone who might have bought a rat outside the province while on holidays this summer is advised to contact an animal or pest control officer to have the rat removed.

Dr. Mike Dorrance, head of the problem wildlife section with the department in Edmonton, says while some people may feel the rodents make good pets, even a few pose a threat to Alberta's agriculture industry.

"Alberta is proud of its distinction of being a rat-free province and legislation is in place to keep it that way," says Dorrance. "Under the Agriculture Pests Act it is illegal to own a rat unless you are a researcher or have a licenced zoo."

Dorrance says the domestic white or colored rat is still a Norway rat which is found wild in most parts of Canada and the world. If set free and allowed to breed the domestic rat will become as widespread and destructive as the feral or wild Norway rat.

"As an example, in the Oyen area in the south-eastern prairie region of Alberta which is a long way from any major urban centre, 25 per cent of the rats caught in that area are white rats indicating that someone in the past let loose a colony of domestic rats which have integrated with the feral Norway rats. If left unchecked they would become a serious problem."

The specialist says there have been a few instances this year where domestic rats have been found in Alberta. One case involved a pet shop which had several rats, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) reported it had found some rats, and in a couple cases private individuals surrendered rats to authorities.

Dorrance says anyone who may have brought domestic rats into the province should take them to the SPCA, or contact a local pest control inspector, agricultural fieldman or district agriculturist to have the rodent picked up.

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Contact: Dr. Mike Dorrance
427-5370

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Drought still a concern for irrigators

Although irrigation is practised on more than 1.3 million acres of agricultural land in Alberta, irrgation farmers cannot ignore the long-term effects of extended and overly dry weather conditions, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Wally Chinn, with the irrigation branch in Lethbridge, says producers should be considering moisture conservation plans now that could pay dividends next year.

"Drought is not an occasional occurrence for much of southern Alberta in particular, but is accepted as a fact of farm life in that area," says the head of the irrigation development section. "It's usually a case of just how dry a "dry" year is going to be.

"Even though there is normally a year's supply of irrigation water in storage reservoirs, irrigation producers must become ever mindful of the effects of continued dry years and open winters on future irrgation."

He says the open winter of 1987-88, the very dry spring and hot dry conditions through much of the crop year have taxed much of the water supplies. This is well recognized by irrigators who had to fire up their systems much earlier this year, even before seeding in a lot of cases, and operate them for many more hours than normal.

However, Chinn says the concern goes beyond hours of operating sprinkler systems. He says dry farm conditions are usually accompanied by reduced recharge of the mountain watersheds that generate the sources of the irrigation water for use by communities and on-farm crop production.

He says in many cases at the end of this year, carry-over in reservoirs could be quite low.

"With the potential for another open winter seemingly greater these last few years, irrigators must give careful consideration to their post-harvest practices this fall and the tentative plans for next year," he says. "With reduced water supplies next year, there could be extensive impacts on the management decisions and successes of next year's operations."

(Cont'd)

He says several irrigation districts have had to restrict water allotments to irrigators since the end of July due to concerns for next year's supplies, while many private irrigators have had to terminate pumping from several watercourses because of severely reduced flows.

Chinn says "that although the gross returns from irrigated crops can be relatively large, the input costs can also be great as compared to dryland production. If water availability for irrigating is reduced, much of the costs of those inputs will not generate an appropriate return."

He says the key for irrigation this year is to plan ahead in consideration of all possibilities. Attention should be paid to minimizing tillage this fall as much as possible to prevent soil moisture loss and to retain stubble and trash cover to gain soil moisture from snow trapping over winter.

In those areas where fall irrigation is still possible, the addition of moisture now to the lower depths of the soil root zone may make the difference next season between an adequate crop and a major disappointment.

"Appropriate planning and action taken now may reduce the effects of critical weather conditions that we could have to contend with in the future," he says. "Beyond that, we'll just have to keep our fingers crossed for a good mountain snowfall this winter and next spring!"

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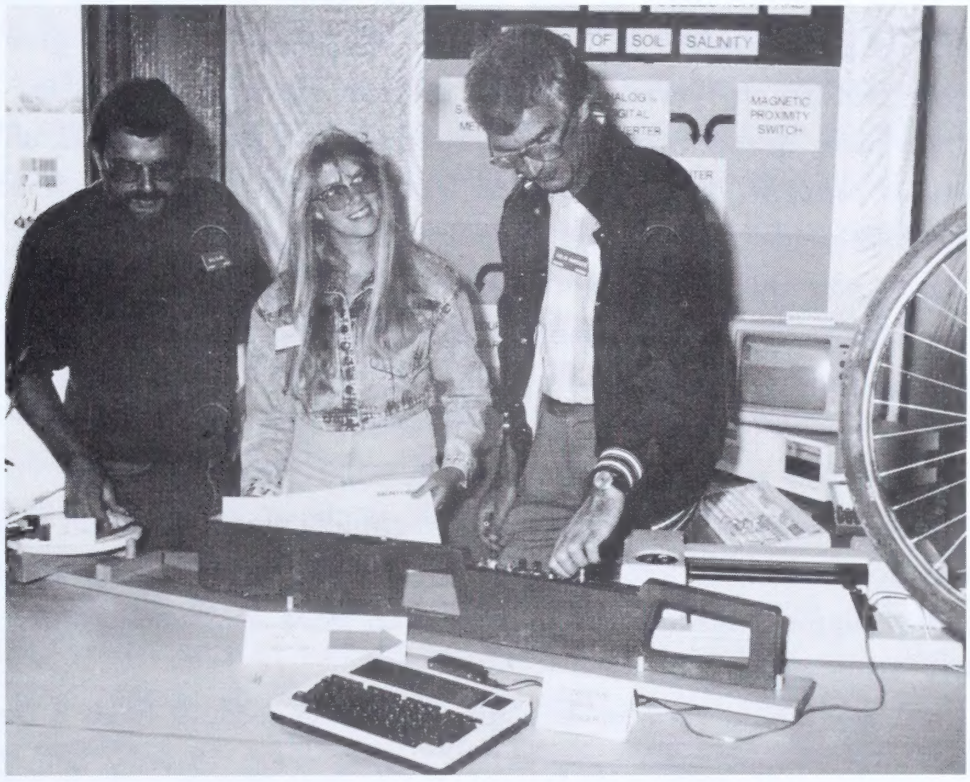
Contact: Wally R. Chinn
381-5864

September 5, 1988
For immediate release

Salinity mapping system developed through combined effort

Government specialists and a private manufacturer have teamed up to develop a portable - relatively inexpensive - system for measuring salinity which could give prairie farmers a better picture of the scope of the problem and advice on how to cope with it.

A newly developed salinity measuring system which can take surface readings of the soil and ultimately produce a map of the amount of salinity within the root zone, has just completed field scale testing at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.



COLIN MCKENZIE, RIGHT, ADJUSTS THE EM38 SALINITY METER, WHILE technologist Neil Clark, left, and assistant Shelley Woods look on.

The EM38 salinity measuring system, requires 150 to 200 times less labor than conventional salinity measurement techniques, says Colin McKenzie, soil and water agronomist at the research facility.

(Cont'd)

McKenzie was among Alberta Agriculture and PFRA specialists who developed the technology which converts the electro magnetic readings of the meter into a map of the surveyed field.

He says the metering system will be of great value to farmers and soil specialists alike.

"We now have a system which a farmer can use on his land which will tell him how serious the soil salinity problem is and what crops are best suited for those soils," says McKenzie. "It is a diagnostic tool.

"From the information the system provides, the farmer can hopefully improve crop production and determine the best course of action to control or reverse the spread of salinity.

"From a government or soil specialist point of view, the soil salinity mapping system is the first tool available which can give us an accurate picture on how widespread the soil salinity problem is.

"We have heard various conflicting figures and estimates on how much salinity is present, but this system will allow for a much more accurate and relatively inexpensive measurement to be taken."

Until now the only other method of measuring soil salinity involved drilling and taking a soil sample which could be sent away for analysis. Usually in salinity investigation programs, two or three holes were drilled on a quarter section. The procedure cost $60 to $70 for the drilling and soil analysis of each hole.

Using the EM38 salinity meter a technician can establish a grid pattern across a field and take readings along those lines. McKenzie says the mapping system will give a much more accurate picture of the salinity situation.

"On any given farm or any given field you could have a degree of salinity that ranges from very little in some areas to very heavy concentrations in another part of the field," says McKenzie. "By using this meter the farmer will be able to determine as an example that half of a quarter section has moderate to low salinity and should be able to support most crops such as wheat, oats, canola, field peas, beans and many vegetable crops.

(Cont'd)

"The printout may also show that at some point in the field the salinity increases making it uneconomical to grow certain crops. At this point the farmer could change his cropping program to include six or two-row barley, sunflower, sugarbeets or some of the salt-tolerant forages. The meter reading and print out becomes a very useful management tool, eliminating the need for trial and error in crop production."

The actual meter which is used in the field was developed by Geonics Limited of Mississaugua, Ontario. The meter was designed to measure salinity, but the readings it produced did not provide specialists with useable information.

Soil and water specialists at Brooks developed the linear equations which convert the EM38 readings into a useable form. PFRA specialists Greg Travis in Hanna and Bill Herron in Regina developed the electronic data logging system which converts the meter readings into numerical values.

The computer program was designed to consider such factors as soil temperature, soil texture and soil moisture. The readings taken by the meter are transferred to a microcomputer which uses a mapping program to produce a contour map of a field showing the degree of salinity.

In test work at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center, the meter, which costs about $5,500 was placed in a small wooden frame or "sled" and pulled by a garden tractor along the grid pattern chosen for the project.

McKenzie says the width of the grid pattern can vary depending on how accurate a picture of the salinity problem is required.

In an upright mode the meter can take a reading from zero to 120 centimetres (four feet) of soil depth. Placed on its side it can take a reading from zero to 60 centimetres (two feet) of soil depth.

The specialist says this particular meter does not have the ability to accurately track salinity discharge and recharge areas which often occur several metres below the soil surface. But it is able to give a graphic picture of the degree of salinity within the crop's root zone.

(Cont'd)

Another model, the EM31, will identify salinity to a depth of six metres, but as yet no one has performed the calibration to convert its readings into a useable form.

McKenzie says the EM38 system which was developed only last fall has not yet had widespread distribution. He says some Alberta Agriculture and PFRA specialists and agriculture consultants have acquired the meters and are beginning to make use of the data conversion and mapping system.

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Contact: Colin McKenzie
362-3391

September 5, 1988
For immediate release

New irrigation specialist appointed to Taber

A local "home-grown" irrigationist has been named the new irrigation specialist of the Taber office for Alberta Agriculture's irrigation branch.

Gordon Cook, who was raised on an irrigation farm just north of Lethbridge, has assumed his duties replacing Wally Chinn, who has accepted a new position in Lethbridge.

GORDON COOK

Chinn, who was recently named head of the irrigation development section, said he is pleased to see someone with Cook's extensive practical experience fill the Taber post.

Cook is a 1986 graduate of the University of Alberta with a bachelor of science degree in agriculture engineering.

Both during and after his university training, he worked with an irrigation equipment supplier as well as a research assistant with Alberta Agriculture's irrigation branch in Lethbridge.

In addition, he has operated his own 240 acre irrigated farming operation.

In announcing the appointment, Chinn says he is certain Cook will quickly become established in his new irrigation specialist functions because of this direct experience and familiarity with local situations.

"This understanding of the needs and concerns of the irrigation community is sure to support him well in his work with producers," says Chinn. He will be able to assist producers in their on-farm developments and soil and water management practices."

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Contact: Wally Chinn 381-5864 or Gordon Cook 223-7908

Agri-News Briefs

CROPS OF ALBERTA NEARING HARVEST

Anyone interested in having a one-stop tour of the range of agricultural crops produced in the province, has about three-weeks left to visit the 1988 Crops of Alberta display in Edmonton. Established on a one-acre site just south of the Alberta Agriculture headquarters on 113 Street, the display site will be harvested and prepared for winter in late September. Donna Pickle, who has co-ordinated this year's display, says several elementary, junior and senior high school and university classes have already scheduled tours of the site. The display features more than 100 plots producing many of the traditional and special crops produced in the province. The public is invited to take self-guided tours of the site or contact Pickle at the department's plant industry division to arrange a guided tour. The co-ordinator expressed her appreciation to all those who have visited the display this year. She says in spite of the dry spring crop production on most plots was good. For more information on the display contact Donna Pickle at 427-7098.

SHEEP AND WOOL FAIR FEATURED IN LACOMBE

Alberta sheep and wool producers will give the general public a look at the quality and scope of the sheep industry in the province in mid-September at the third annual Lambs in Lacombe sheep fair. Set for September 17 at the Lacombe Fair Grounds, the event features displays of several breeds of sheep produced in Alberta, a commercial ewe lamb sale and a extensive craft sale. Billed as a "fun-filled, family-oriented, old time sheep fair" the event is set in an atmosphere of tents, clowns and face painting amid an array of booths operated by local craftsmen. Key events during the day include sheep dog competitions, the sheep-to-shawl contest, mutton busting for the kids, shearing demonstrations and a barbecue. The fair which opens at 10 a.m. with a sheep dog demonstration runs until evening with the shawl auction and ewe lamb sale beginning at 7 p.m. For more information contact Jennifer Oak at 682-2490 in Winfield.

(Cont'd)

GREEN TOMATOES WILL RIPEN

While most home gardeners strive for vine-ripened tomatoes, an Alberta Agriculture specialist says if the weather turns bad the green tomatoes can usually be ripened indoors. Pam North, a horticulturist with the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in northeast Edmonton says tomatoes that have lost their dark green color and are turning yellowish green will ripen. She recommends leaving the green tomatoes on a sunny window sill rather than wrapping in paper and storing in a box. She says tomatoes ripened in the sun will have 50 per more vitamin C than those ripened in the dark.

SILAGE MANUAL AND VIDEO GIVES SOUND ADVICE

Forage producers looking for sound advice on some of the science and skill required in producing good quality silage should obtain a copy of a new Alberta Agriculture publication and accompanying video. The Silage Manual, and the 12-minute video "Let's Make Silage" which have just been released, were prepared by several forage specialists, livestock nutrionists, farm machinery engineers and agriculture economists from Alberta and Saskatchewan. The 55-page booklet covers virtually all aspects of silage production including crops for silage, the ensiling process, silage additives, silage harvesting, silos, evaluating silage quality, feeding value of silages and costs of silage production. Along with a well-written text the manual also contains dozens of photographs, charts and graphs which help explain the message. The video featuring regional forage specialist Bjorn Berg and livestock nutritionist Rick Corbett covers three main silgae compoents - length of cut, packing and nutrient values. For a copy of the Silage Manual contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or write The Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. To borrow the video, contact any of the Alberta Agriculture regional film libraries or the Broadcast Media Branch, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Coming Agriculture Events

Equi-Fair
Spruce Meadows
Calgary, Alberta.....September 7 - 11
Bob Coleman - Edmonton - 427-8905

National Dairy Council of Canada Convention
Westin Hotel
Winnipeg, Manitoba.....September 11 - 14
Dale Tulloch - Ottawa - (613) 238-4116

Light Horse Improvement Program
Westerner Exhibition Grounds
Red Deer, Alberta.....Sept. 17 - 18 - Sept. 24 - 25
Bob Coleman - Edmonton - 427-8905; Les Burwash - Calgary - 297-6650

Waterton Housewives Conference
Bayshore Inn
Waterton Park, Alberta.....October 4 - 6
Iris Armfelt - 627-4023 - Pincher Creek

Alberta Feed Industry Conference
Red Deer Lodge
Red Deer, Alberta.....October 13 - 14
Wayne Anderson - 459-3981 - St. Albert

Serger Workshop - Creative Serger
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....October 21 - 23
Extension Services - Olds - 556-8344

Alberta Horticultural Congress - Second Annual
Terrace Hotel
Edmonton, Alberta.....November 3 - 5
Lloyd Hausher - Brooks - 363-3391

Northlands Farmfair
Northlands Agricom
Edmonton, Alberta.....November 3 - 12
Dave Hutton - Edmonton - 471-7112

International Irrigation Exposition and Technical Conference
"Making Deserts Bloom Worldwide - Panacea or Pandora's Box?"
Las Vegas, Nevada..... November 6 - 9
Akos Pungor - Lethbridge - 381-5140

The Canadian Bankers' Association Agricultural Credit Conference
Westin Bayshore Hotel
Vancouver, B.C. .....November 6 - 9

(Cont'd)

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Seed Technology Workshop
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....November 7 - 9
Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds

Canadian Finals Rodeo
Northlands Coliseum
Edmonton, Alberta.....November 9 - 13
Dave Hutton - Edmonton - 471-7112

Texas-Alberta Longhorn Show
Northlands Agricom
Edmonton, Alberta.....November 9
Dave Hutton - Edmonton - 471-7112

Agri-Trade Farm Equipment Show
Westerner Exhibition Grounds
Red Deer, Alberta.....November 10 - 13

Saskhort Convention and Trade Show
Vagabond Inn
Regina, Saskatchewan.....November 10 - 12
Bruce Horn - University of Saskatchewan - (306) 966-5551

Weed Identification Workshop
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....November 14, 16, 21, 23
Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds

National Agricultural Employment Conference
Hamilton Convention Centre
Hamilton, Ontario.....November 14 - 18
Denyse Beauchesne - Hull - (819) 953-3404

Agricultual Fieldman Inservice Training Course
Capilano Motor Inn
Edmonton, Alberta.....November 21 - 25
Dennis Bergheim - St. Paul - 645-3301

Ninth Canadian Dehy Conference
Holiday Inn
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.....November 21 - 23
Bruce Hobin - University of Saskatchewan - (306) 966-551

Population Growth in Southern Alberta -
Is There a Water Crisis Coming?
Lethbridge Lodge Hotel
Lethbridge, Alberta.....November 21 - 23
Jim Webber - Brooks - 362-4532; Akos Pungor - Lethbridge - 381-5145

(Cont'd)

Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta - Annual Convention
Nisku Inn
Nisku, Alberta.....November 23 - 24
Gus Polman - 428-6981

Canadian Western Agribition
Regina Exhibition Grounds
Regina, Saskatchewan.....November 26 - December 2
Mark Allan - Regina - (306) 565-0565

1989

Dairy Herdsman Assistant Course
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....January 3 - April 21
Registration deadline - December 15
Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds

57th Annual Farm and Home Week
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.....January 9 - 13
Bruce Hobin - (306) 966-5551 - Saskatoon

Unifarm Annual Convention
Edmonton Inn
Edmonton, Alberta.....January 9 - 12
Willow Webb - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Alberta Horse Breeders and Owners Conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta.....January 14 - 15
Les Burwash - Calgary - 297-6650; Bob Coleman - Edmonton - 427-8905

Banff Pork Seminar
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff, Alberta.....January 24 - 27
Val Smyth - 432-2406 - Edmonton

Second Annual, Alberta Farm Women's Conference
Red Deer, Alberta.....January 25 - 27
Faye Mayberry - Red Deer - 886-4129

Western Fertilizer and Chemical Dealers Association
Palliser Hotel and Round Up Centre
Calgary, Alberta.....February 14 - 17
Dave Wowchuk - (204) 725-4236 - Brandon

Sheep Production Course
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....February 20 - 22
Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds
(Cont'd)

Sheep Shearing Course
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....February 23 - 24
Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds

Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit 1989
Kananaskis Lodge
Mt. Allen, Alberta.....March 5 - 8
Gerde Andres - Olds - 556-4277

Alberta Dairy Seminar
Kananaskis Lodge
Mt. Allen, Alberta.....March 14 - 17
Val Smyth - U of A - Edmonton - 432-2406

Women of Unifarm Annual Convention
Red Deer, Alberta.....March 14 - 16
Willow Webb - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Prairie Barley Production Symposium
Crop Development Centre
University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.....March 21 - 22
B.G. Rossnagel - Saskatoon - (306) 966-4976

(Cont'd)

Coming Agricultural Events

1. Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in Decmeber 1988, January, February, March 1989 or any events omitted in the attached list? Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the name, city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by November 25, 1988 to:

Print Media Branch
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News. The next edition will be printed December 5, 1988.)

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For immediate release

Greenhouse research geared to assist industry

Testing new kinds and varieties of flowers under different growing conditions is just part of the ongoing research work performed by Alberta Agriculture's greenhouse specialist in Brooks.

Judy Butt says her work at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center is tailored to support the Alberta greenhouse industry in its attempts to expand and improve vegetable and flower production.

Butt says the challenge is to refine growing techniques and develop varieties that can return maximum benefit to the Alberta greenhouse industry.

"It's not the type of research that will achieve major breakthroughs and revolutionize the greenhouse industry," says Butt. "We're working on projects that will lead to gradual, more efficient, progressive growth of the industry."

The specialist, who joined the department earlier this year, says along with providing extension services to greenhouse owners, work involves several ongoing research projects.

Butt, and technician Murray Briant, are looking at improving hydroponic technology. One project is testing rock wool as a growing medium for cucumbers, instead of soil. As well they are working with different formulas of liquid plant food used in nutrient film technique (NFT) to determine the right "recipe" for Alberta growing conditions.

Variety trials are also being conducted on a relatively new cut flower being grown in Alberta - Alstroemeria.

About 1.5 acres of the flowers, which were introduced to Alberta about three years ago, are now being produced says Butt.
A high-yielding flower that reproduces through rhizomes, Alstroemeria is best suited to cool growing conditions where soil temperature stays about 15 Celsius.

(Cont'd)

JUDY BUTT, DISCUSSES ALSTROEMERIA DISPLAY WITH MURRAY BRIANT

Part of the work with the Dutch flower is aimed at developing varieties which can be productive in warmer summer temperatures.

The flower, which comes in a range of colors including rose, yellow and white and has a vase life of up to two weeks, produces about 200 stems per square metre under optimal growing conditions.

"Although prices fluctuate, the grower can receive anywhere from 80 cents to $1 per stem, so it is a very economical crop to produce," says Butt. "I don't think the industry feels there is opportunity for significant increase in production in Alberta, but hopefully through research work we can develop improved varieties and broaden suitable growing conditions."

The Brooks specialist will also be conducting variety trials with some new potted plants in the near future. Butt says she expects to be taking a look at new varieties of Anemone and Asiatic Lilies.

These flowers, which can also be produced for the cut-flower market, are grown in Alberta on a limited scale. Tests will look at nutrition, temperature and other environmental factors affecting growth.

Contact: Judy Butt
362-3391

September 12, 1988
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Harry Warne receives national honor

HARRY WARNE

A former financial management specialist with Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds, has been honored with a national award.

Harry Warne, who worked for the department for more than 32 years before retiring in 1987, recently received the Canadian Farm Business Management Excellence Award presented by the Canadian Agricultural Economics and Farm Management Society (CAEFMS).

The award was presented to Warne by Dr. Len Bauer, chairman of the CAEFMS awards committee at the society's annual meeting in Calgary.

Warne is the second member of the farm business management branch to win the award in the last three years. Wilson Loree, branch head, received the honor in 1986.

The award "encourages and recognizes excellence in extension, research and teaching of farm business management concepts and practice in Canada."

In his acceptance speech Warne paid tribute to working at the farm business management branch in Olds.

"The freedom I received at the branch greatly helped with my achievements," he said. "I greatly appreciated the support provided by co-workers, and other department staff. This award is also for all those people who are still working hard in carrying out these programs."

As branch head, Loree said the award is also an honor for the branch and the Department of Agriculture.

"We are all very pleased," he said. "It is a great honor to have the award back 'home' in Alberta and the department. This award once again recognizes the quality of our staff and the service we offer."

(Cont'd)

Warne worked for Alberta Agriculture for 32 years. He first held a department position as instructor at Fairview College for 20 years and for the last 12 years of his career specialized in financial management with the farm business management branch in Olds.

Warne was nominated by his collegues at the branch and agri-businesses. In making the nomination, Loree stated, "We feel Harry's dedicated service in farm management teaching, extension and research has had a significant impact on the progress of Alberta agricultural businesses.

"His in-depth knowledge of farm management, supported by patience, fortitude and long hours of work, and the outstanding quality of his personal interaction with his students, government extension workers, farmers, co-workers, bankers, lawyers, accountants and consultants has gained Harry respect and admiration."

"During this time Harry did a tremendous amount of work in farm management and made a valuable contribution to the industry. He was the key developer of the intensive course manual, worksheets and visual aids for the Gear Up Financially courses now running for the fourth year.

Along with Loree's comments, Warne also received tributes from co-workers and industry associates.

"Harry spent many long hours behind the scenes looking after details - a credit to and a manifestation of Harry's dedication to excellence," said Gordon McNaughton, co-ordinator for the Farm Financial Management Initiative Program.

Referring to Warne's work in initiating the Agricultural Workshop for Lenders, now in its ninth year, and the Tax Update for Lawyers and Accountants seminars, now in its tenth year, Merle Good, farm management economist with the branch, stated, "Harry should be commended for his dedication and liaion role that he has played so successfully between farmers and their lenders and professional advisers. It was his vision and personality that allowed and maintained the rapport that has been established in the rural areas between farmers, lenders, accountants and lawyers.

(Cont'd)

Thomas James with Cook Snowdon Barristers and Solicitors said he valued Warne's opinions and expertise.

"This feeling is common among all people who have come in contact with Mr. Warne," said James.

Vern Warkentin with the Royal Bank of Canada, who gave the nomination his whole-hearted support, said "Harry has conducted himself in the highest professional manner to achieve betterment of the agricultural industry. His concern for the well-being of agriculture has always been evident and he has conducted himself in a most professional manner to achieve benefit and strong support for the industry's most important member, the farmer."

A former student, Dieter Steimecke, said as an instructor "Harry was one of those individuals who believed in people and inspired them to reach their goals."

The CAEFMS annual meeting took place as part of the Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC) national conference at the University of Calgary.

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Contact: Wilson Loree
556-4213

September 12, 1988
For immediate release

Calgary native named weather technologist

SHANE CHETNER

A recent graduate from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, has been named the new weather resource technologist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

Shane Chetner, who was born and raised in Calgary and graduated earlier this year from UBC with a bachelor of science degree in physical geography, has been named to the post.

His appointment was announced by John Hermans, acting head of the department's conservation and development branch. Chetner will be working under the direction of weather resource specialist, Peter Dzikowski.

In his new role, he will work closely with the Alberta farming community. Duties will include preparing the regularly published Alberta Agriculture Weather Summary and co-ordinating the Farm Weather Line. He will also help in preparing fact sheets and other publications, and act as a consultant to the agricultural community by providing information on climate and weather.

Prior to his appointment to this full-time position, Chetner had worked as a research assistant with the branch in Edmonton, helping evaluate crop growth and yield models, and preparing weekly and monthly weather reports.

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Contact: Shane Chetner
422-4385

For immediate release

Fall soil test is important management tool

Soil sampling for fall soil testing is a good management practice, but it is important samples be taken as late as possible in the fall, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Soil samples taken too early can cause misleading results in a soil test, resulting in farmers spending more on nitrogen fertilizer than is necessary, says Len Kryzanowski, a soil specialist in Edmonton.

Kryzanowski says research shows in central and northern Alberta the soil should be sampled after the first week of October, while for southern Alberta, after mid-October is the best time.

He says when crops are harvested early, soil micro-organisms are continuing to release nitrogen into the soil. If soils are sampled too early, soil test results will miss this increase in soil nitrogen.

Although it's best to take samples close to freeze-up, don't wait too long and miss the opportunity of fall sampling. Sampling during winter is not recommended due to the difficulty in obtaining a representative sample.

The specialist says not only is timing of fall sampling important for soil testing, but so is the procedure for taking a representative soil sample of a field.

He lists some of the key points to remember:

1. Do not sample frozen or waterlogged soils.
2. Size up each area before sampling. Based on past observations of field variations such as crop growth or yield, soil texture, soil color, slope of the land, degree of erosion, draining and past management, divide the field into portions that are different. Avoid unusual areas such as back furrows, old straw, hay or manure piles, water ways, saline spots, eroded knolls and old fence rows. Separate samples should be taken from sizable areas where growth is significantly different from the rest of the field.

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3. Soil from 10 to 20 places in a field should be collected (subsamples) at random to obtain a composite sample representative of the area.
4. Depth of sampling is very important since crops can utilize nitrogen and sulphur to a depth of 60 centimetres (24 inches) or more. Using a proper soil sampling tool, soil samples should be taken at intervals of 0 to 15 centimetres (0-6 inches), 15 to 30 centimetres (6-12 inches) and 30 to 60 centimetres (12 to 24 inches). The subsamples from each depth should be mixed together to form a composite sample. It is important that individual depths be kept separate and properly dried to insure reliable test results and recommendations. Approximately 500 grams (one pound) of soil for each depth sampled is needed for analyses.
5. An information sheet should be fully completed, noting any unusual problems. A duplicate copy should be kept.

Kryzanowski says combining the practice of fall fertilization with fall soil sampling may appear to be difficult, but some simple guidelines can be used:

a. If fertilizer is not being applied in the fall, then sampling can be done any time between the first week of October and freeze-up. Fertilizer can be applied in the spring based on the soil test recommendation.
b. If fertilizer is to be applied in the fall, it is recommended the application be in late fall. Soil samples for testing should be taken prior to fertilizer application since it is difficult to get a representative soil sample after fertilization. Many laboratories can provide a quick return of soil test results and fertilizer requirements. Even if laboratory results are delayed, a moderate amount of fertilizer can be applied in the fall based on past experience. Additional fertilizer can be applied in spring based on the soil test recommendation and spring soil moisture.

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"Soil samples should be sent to a reputable soil testing laboratory, which uses methods of soil analyses and recommendations based on research in Alberta," says Kryzanowski. "There are a number of private laboratories in the province available to farmers. As well, the Alberta Agriculture Soils and Animal Nutrition Laboratory provides a soil testing service for farmers."

A soil test report will provide measurements of the available nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and sulphur, plus soil pH, salinity, texture and free-lime level. Additional analyses can be requested.

To obtain a soil sampling probe and information sheets, contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or fertilizer supply company. For more information on soil sampling contact: Alberta Agriculture, Soils and Animal Nutrition Laboratory, 9th Floor, O.S. Longman Building, 6909 - 116 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 4P2, or phone 436-9150 (Government RITE line number 427-6362).

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Contact: Len Kryzanowski
436-9150

For immediate release

August weather provided a double bonus

August weather was good for most agricultural producers in Alberta, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Good rainfall early in the month and good harvesting weather at the end provided a double bonus.

Peter Dzikowski, the department's agricultural weather resource specialist in Edmonton, says August this year was similar to the same month last year.

Both months had above normal rainfall, mostly early in the month, then drier conditions and good harvesting weather near the end. In both years, southern Alberta and northern Alberta got about half the rainfall that central parts of the province received.

This August, Ranfurly, a community east of Vegreville, was the wettest spot in Alberta, recording 166 millimetres of rain, more than double the long-term average of 74 millimetres for the month.

Lloydminister and Calgary were next with 149.3 and 144.9 millimetres, more than double their normal August rainfall of 70.7 and 55.4 millimetres, respectively.

"Most locations in central Alberta reported rainfall amounts of 80 to 110 millimetres, generally above 150 per cent of normal for August," says the specialist with the conservation and development branch. "The Peace region and southern Alberta were quite dry, with most places reporting 30 to 60 millimetres of rain."

The driest spots were Grande Prairie with 29.2 millimetres, 48 per cent of normal, and Manyberries with 18.8 millimetres, 54 per cent of normal.

"Monthly temperature values were near normal for August at most central and southern Alberta locations," says Dzikowski. "In the Peace region however, temperatures averaged about one degree Celsius above normal. This is like having an extra three days for crop growth and should speed crop maturity."

(Cont'd)

August began with below normal temperatures and above normal rainfall in central and northern areas, while the south remained dry. A period of more seasonable temperatures and scattered showers followed. There was a return in the third week to cooler, wetter weather with six to eight days of rain in a row in most of central and northern Alberta.

The rain caused concern about crop lodging, quality deterioration and possibly poor harvest conditions. Clearing near the end of the month brought a bit of light frost scattered throughout Alberta on one or two nights, but no significant widespread crop damage occurred. The clearing brought bright, warm harvesting weather with temperatures three to six degrees Celsius above normal, which carried on into September.

"The above normal August rainfall, heaviest in much of central Alberta, will help replenish soil moisture reserves for the 1989 crop season," says the specialist. "It was the stored soil moisture from August 1987, that helped many central Alberta producers get through the drought conditions they experienced early this year.

"However, much of the southeast remains in a situation similar to the one in August, 1987, with little soil moisture reserve to help offset the drought conditions experienced this year.

"The ample August rain will help forage and pasture growth and should help provide improved fall grazing conditions, but at the expense of soil moisture reserves."

For more information contact Peter Dzikowski at 422-4385.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

For immediate release

Pinkeye can be a year-round problem

Although infectious pinkeye in cattle is usually worse during the warm summer months, an Alberta Agriculture veterinarian says it can be a problem at any time of the year.

This disease, which may reslt in severe eye irritation and production losses, does not have a single cause. And there is no sure-fire way to prevent it either.

However, Dr. Casey Schipper, beef cattle veterinarian, says producers should take steps to eliminate factors which spread the disease. He says early detection and treatment will reduce production losses.

Pinkeye can affect the eyes of beef or dairy cattle at any age, although range calves and feedlot cattle are the most frequent victims.

The infection rarely results in death, although severely affected cattle, suffering pain, will lose both appetite and body condition. Herd outbreaks have been reported which have lasted from three to four weeks and in which 80 per cent of animals have been involved.

Schipper says because there are different environmental factors as well as a different kinds of bacteria, viruses, and even worm parasites of the eye which appear to play a role in herd outbreaks, it is hard to pinpoint a cause.

He says some recent work has shown that infected carrier animals may be a source of infection. A carrier is an animal that may or may not have suffered from pinkeye in the past and shows no outward signs of the disease.

Other factors which contribute to the spread of pinkeye include ultraviolet light from the sun, a lack of pigmentation of the eyelid, prominence of eyes, fly population, age (calves are more susceptible than older cattle), and other eye irritants such as dusty conditions, tall grasses, and rough forages.

(Cont'd)

Winter epidemics of pinkeye have been attributed to ultraviolet light reflected from snow and low temperature damage to the eye.

Although spontaneous recovery from pinkeye is not uncommon, Schipper recommends early treatment of the disease.

He says eye drops or ointments work effectively for mild or early cases. Repeated doses may be required. In more severe cases an injection of antibiotics under the lining of the affected eyelid is needed.

Other methods of treatment include performing eye surgery to protect the affected eyeball from further injury and promote healing, or gluing a protective plastic eye cover onto the skin round the eyes to avoid further eye irritation.

In addition to medical treatment, good management and nursing care is required to bring about full recovery. General recommendations include housing the animal in a shaded area, providing adequate feed and water and reducing the amount of dust, flies and other irritants.

The veterinarian says there is no simple solution to preventing pinkeye. Using insecticide impregnated eartags which help control face and horn flies and managing pastures to keep tall grasses short to prevent eye irritation are useful management techniques.

He says while research is underway, no effective vaccine which guarantees immunity against pinkeye has been developed.

Schipper cautions farmers not to confuse pinkeye with eye problems caused by foreign material in the eye, physical injury or other diseases. Early cases of cancer eye and infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR) may resemble early stages of pinkeye. He recommends a producer consult a veterinarian if there is any doubt.

For more information on pinkeye obtain a copy of a recently revised Alberta Agriculture publication "Infectious Pinkeye of Cattle" (Agdex FS663-11) available from Alberta Agriculture district offices or from The Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Dr. Casey Schipper
436-9343

For immediate release

Agriculture to maintain role as food supplier

Agriculture isn't likely to become a major threat to the oil industry as a producer of energy a recent Calgary conference of agriculturists was told.

A key speaker addressing the national conference of the Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC) agreed the primary role of agriculture will continue to be the production of food.

Dennis Avery, of World Perspectives Inc. of Washington D.C. predicted alternatives to fossil fuels will be developed as the world moves to minimize the impact of the Greenhouse Effect.

Avery, told the conference agriculture has had a long-running relationship with energy.

He said agriculture uses fossil fuels to power machinery and relies on petroleum-based fertilizers and agriculture chemicals in crop and livestock production. However as the industry becomes more efficient and more concerned about environmental factors, it will likely have less demand on petroleum products.

The conference heard while there is some interest to use grains to produce ethanol as an alternate energy source, the agriculture industry is too small to produce enough ethanol to meet the world demand for energy.

Most scientists agree, the "greenhouse effect" - a global warming trend blamed on emissions from burning fossil fuels - is caused by the accumulation of trapped carbon dioxide and inert gases in the earth's atmosphere which trap the sun's ultraviolet rays and gradually raises world temperatures.

Avery said the droughts in North America and other parts of the world in the 1980s are being attributed to normal climatic variables and not the greenhouse effect.

The speaker told the conference however, the long-term forecast is for an increasing warming trend which could raise sea levels and dramatically alter weather patterns, if harmful emissions are not reduced.

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He suggested a reduction in burning fossil fuels, elimination of chloroflourocarbons, more tropical reforestation to increase oxygen production, and more use of natural gas as an energy source as some short-term measures which could help alleviate the problem.

Avery said alternative energy sources, other than ethanol, need to be developed to provide a long-term solution.

He suggested hydroelectric power, nuclear power and hydrogen energy as the leading candidates to replace fossil fuels.

"Fuel alcohol from farm products is not a likely candidate to displace fossil fuels, even under the pressure of a greenhouse emergency," he said in his speech. "In the first place, the world uses much larger volumes of energy than it does farm products. Farmers could supply only a small part of the energy needed without driving their costs well above the projected cost levels of competing fuels. Secondly, even if farmers could produce enough of it at low-enough costs, fuel alcohol doesn't help the atmospheric pollution problem very much. Ethanol doesn't add CO2, but it does release volatile elements that worsen ozone pollution in the lower atmosphere."

Another speaker on agriculture and energy, Jim Gray of Biotechnica Canada of Calgary, told the conference as agriculture becomes more efficient there will reduced energy demand. He said biotechnology will continue to be the key to production efficiency and industry survival.

Dr. Fenton McCardy, former Dean of Agriculture at the University of Alberta, on a related topic, told the conference that improved agricultural technology will ease the energy crunch. He said less energy will be required to produce greater amounts of agricultural products.

The conference was attended by more than 1,100 agriculturists working for provincial and federal governments, universities and private industry.

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Contact: Dennis Avery
(202) 785-3345

AGRI-NEWS

September 19, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

New name emphasizes farm machinery research mandate

Developing Alberta Agriculture's Farm Machinery Research Centre means much more to Alberta farmers than simply slapping a new label on an old product.

The provincial department of agriculture is reshaping a structure that has been doing a good job, to create an even better service to help farmers sort the wheat from the chaff when it comes to buying farm machinery.

The new Farm Machinery Research Centre replaces the former Alberta branch of the Prairie Agriculture Machinery Institute (PAMI) which operated on the back lot of the Lethbridge Community College campus for more than a dozen years.

PAMI, a prairie-wide organization supported by all three prairie provinces, was dedicated to testing and evaluating a wide range of farm machinery.

Alberta Agriculture seeing a need to develop an expanded service to better meet the needs of Alberta producers, opted out of the agreement in 1987 and created the new research centre this spring.

Rick Atkins, who worked for PAMI for seven years (two years as manager) and continues on now as manager of the new research centre, says the name change is more than window dressing.

"PAMI has in the past and continues in Saskatchewan and Manitoba to provide a valuable service to western agriculture," says Atkins. "But under the new structure, as a section of the provincial department of agriculture, the centre has an expanded mandate particularly in the area of research, to serve the agriculture industry of Alberta.

"There is still a close tie with PAMI and a lot of information and expertise will be shared back and forth, but our expanded role will allow us to better meet the needs of all Western Canadian farmers."

Although the centre's main function of evaluating machinery will continue Atkins says he is excited about the centre's new research role.

(Cont'd)

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ALBERTA FARM MACHINERY RESEARCH CENTRE

(Left Photo) Research Centre manager Rick Atkins with some of the seeding equipment being evaluated by the centre.

(Right Photo) Electronic Engineering Technologist Victor Smith, works on a computer program which will assist in testing machinery.

He says the faciltity's engineers and technologists will concentrate on two areas of research.

One area will involve in-house research which addresses questions the institute may have about a piece of equipment, which will compliment their evaluation work.

Other research projects, being conducted under contract for clients, will not only look at the mechanical operation of equipment, but delve into how the equipment suits crop production techniques.

"This area of research is a whole new game for us," says Atkins. "It will be a joint approach looking not only at the mechanical side but at the agronomic side and involve work with various branches of the department. It won't be simply an engineering matter, but could involve specialists in crop production and soil and water conservation as well as federal agriculture specialists."

Atkins stresses that like PAMI, the new research centre cannot provide "consumer reports" recommending one swather or combine is better than another.

"The main aspect of our work here is to test and evaluate farm machinery and provide an unbiased report on what that piece of equipment can do...point out under which conditions it works best," he says. "If we run into an obvious structural or operational problem during the evaluation process we will go back to the manufacturer and recommend changes.

"Once that evaluation is done we will produce a report which spells out the equipment's capabilities. If it's a cultivator it will explain how the equipment works under various soil and tillage conditions. It will recommend the size of tractor needed to operate it efficiently and so on."

Atkins says the reports are useful to farmers planning to buy new or used equipment. They give producers a good idea of whether a particular make and model of a machine or piece of equipment, evaluated by the institute, is suited to the soil, tractor size and other farming conditions they have at home.

(Cont'd)

The manager says the centre's philosophy is to help farmers by helping manufacturers build machinery and equipment which is practical and functional in daily use.

The testing and evaluation is provided on a wide range of equipment including grain drying, grading and storage equipment; water and fuel pumps and electric generators; fertilizer and irrigating equipment; harvesting equipment; tillage and soil conditioning equipment; seeding equipment; and wagons, transporters and others.

The Lethbridge-based centre, like it did under PAMI, will continue to specialize in evaluation of seeding and tillage equipment, spraying equipment and fan testing.

Primarily the centre works with small to medium size manufacturers who have developed prototype equipment - a demonstration model that has not yet gone into full production.

The equipment is put through a series of engineering tests, along with about 100 hours of normal field operation, to see how it performs. Problems are reported back to the manufacturer for correction before the final evaluation report is written.

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Contact: Rick Atkins
381-5729

Alberta machinery manufacturers are innovative

The small to medium size farm machinery makers across the prairies have a lot of good ideas for improving equipment, but often not the resources to fully test and develop their products, says the manager of Alberta's newest research centre.

Evaluation provided by Alberta Agriculture's Farm Machinery Research Centre, headquartered in Lethbridge, not only helps the industry, says Rick Atkins, but in the long run produces a better line of equipment to serve Alberta farmers.

"Prairie manufacturers are really innovative and are always looking for new and better lines of equipment to meet the needs of producers," says Atkins. "On the prairies, and in Alberta in particular, we have very specific crop and livestock production conditions which require specialized equipment. Through our evaluation and testing program at the centre we are able to work with the manufacturers of this equipment which will ultimately benefit farmers."

The Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre is the new name of a restructured service replacing the former Prairie Agriculture Machinery Institute (PAMI).

Atkins who worked with PAMI for more than seven years continues on as manager of the new centre which is now a full-fledged section of the provincial department of agriculture.

The facility's main complex on the campus of Lethbridge Community College provides office space for the 10 full-time staff of project engineers, technologists, an electronics specialist, a fabrication specialist and support staff, as well as sophisticated testing facilities.

Working with prairie manufacturers, the centre tests a wide range of machinery, although it specializes in seeding, tillage and soil conservation equipment, spraying equipment, and aeration and ventilation fan testing.

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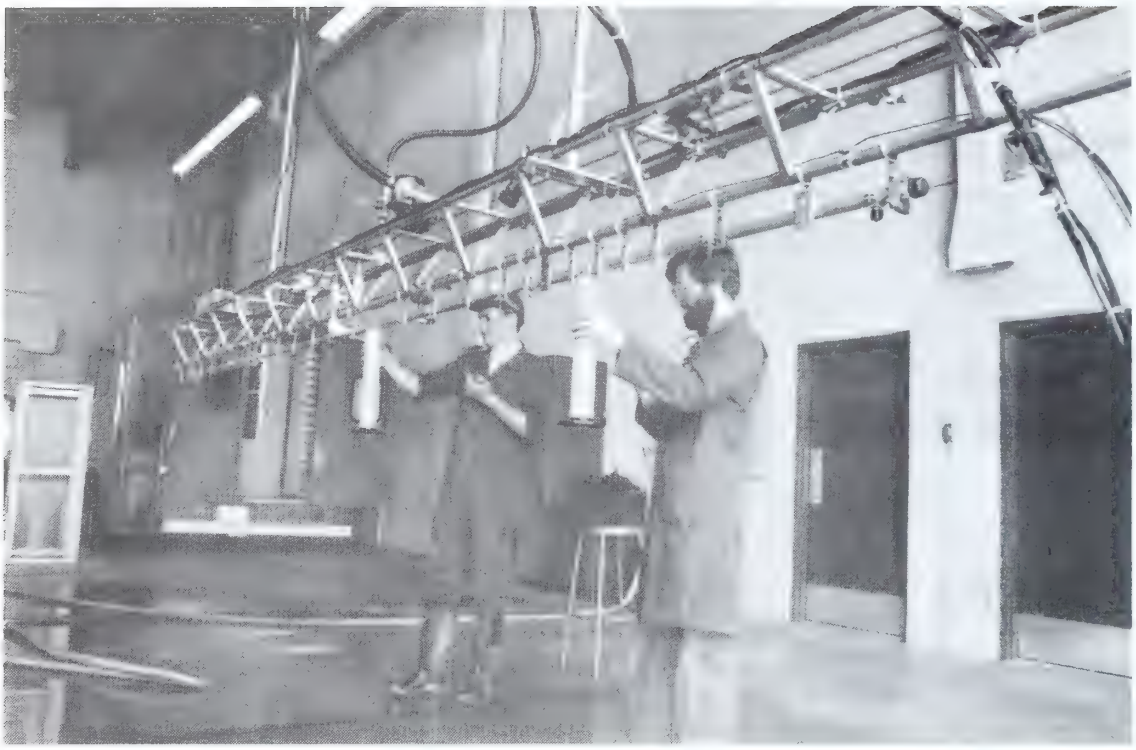

Technologists at the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre check accuracy of a spray boom in the main testing lab

LEFT PHOTO - Van containing diagnostic equipment is connected to airseeder to assist with evaluation.

RIGHT PHOTO - Engineers test performance of a water pump.

When an evaluation is made the equipment is first put through rigorous laboratory testing which includes confirming callibrations, performance testing, measuring power requirements, assessing structural strength, assessing uniformity, accuracy and many other technical aspects.

The lab work is followed by as much as 100 hours of actual on-farm field testing provided by co-operating producers within about a 50-mile radius of Lethbridge. In the case of tillage and seeding equipment, the machinery is put through as many variable soil and tillage conditions as possible to see how it performs.

In the field, the equipment being tested is often monitored by computer to further assess performance.

"Every effort is made to make the testing as extensive as possible so we can report to producers how the equipment performs under a variety of conditions," says Atkins.

"We work as unbiased observers assessing the equipment's capabilities. And from the manufacturer's point of view they want an honest evaluation because they don't want to put their name on a product that isn't going to perform under routine field-scale use."

Atkins says the number of projects handled in a year depends on several factors. He says most equipment testing is done on a short-term basis of one crop year. Evaluation reports often cannot comment on the long-term durability of equipment, although any obvious weak points or areas of excessive wear are noted and usually corrected by the manufacturer.

The Lethbridge lab has one of the few test chambers in Canada which can measure the performance of aeration and ventilation fans. The centre evaluates about 20 different fans a year.

Although the centre has many established clients, it also actively promotes its services to new manufacturers through displays at trade shows and direct contact with the industry.

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Contact: Rick Atkins
381-5729

Chinese officials honor Alberta specialists

Alberta Agriculture specialists have been honored by officials from the People's Republic of China for their help over the last four years in providing technical advice on a major range improvement project.

Officials from Alberta's sister province of Heilongjiang recently visited Alberta to make presentations to provincial livestock, forage and soil specialists.

The visitors also spent two weeks learning more about agriculture in Alberta in a tour that took them to Barrhead, Edmonton, Camrose, Lacombe and Lethbridge.

Wu Shi Fang, deputy director of the bureau of animal husbandry in Harbin, Wang Sun Ming, a soil specialist and deputy dean of the College of Agricultural Cadres of Heilongjiang and Li Shu Sheng, senior livestock specialist also with the bureau, along with senior translator Wong Bin Jin made the visit to specifically present traditional Chinese certificates of gratitude to Alberta specialists.

The three being recognized were Adolph Goettel, head of the department's soils branch in Edmonton, Rob Hand, regional livestock specialist for the department's northwest region headquartered in Barrhead, and Myron Bjorge, provincial forage specialist headquartered at the field crops branch in Lacombe.

Working under an agreement signed between Alberta and Heilongjiang in 1983, the Alberta specialists provided technical advice to the Chinese on a range improvement project on the government owned Qiqihar (pronounced chi-chi-har) Animal Breeding Farm.

Located in the western part of Heilongjiang province, the farm which encompassed about 40,000 acres, is on flat prairie country with similar topography to the area around Hanna, Alberta, although not quite as dry.

In the Chinese province where the beef industry is just emerging, the challenge facing Alberta specialists was to recommend management practices which would help improve forage and livestock production on land that was predominantly affected by alkali and saline soils.

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Alberta Agriculture specialists accept "Certificates of Gratitude" from the Chinese delegation. Above from left, David Wong, trade director; Myron Bjorge, forage specialist; Barry Mehr, assistant deputy minister; Wu Shi Fang; Ben McEwen, deputy minister of agriculture; Adolph Goettel, soil specialist; Wang Sun Ming, Wong Bin Jin and Li Shu Sheng. The traditional certificates are Chinese calligraphy on velvet.

The Alberta specialists visited the Chinese province for three to four weeks each summer over the four years to conduct soil and forage analysis, establish test plots and suggest management changes. Over the term of the agreement the Chinese officials also made two technical missions to Alberta.

As the soil specialist, Goettel concluded Qiqihar soils were very deficient in nitrogen and phosphorous. Hay production could be increased by up to nine times by applying fertilizer to pastures seeded to tame forages.

It was recommended more field scale tests be conducted with tame forages to demonstrate improved management including weed control and fertilizers.

(Cont'd)

Referring to forage, Bjorge recommended the Qiqihar farm managers try Canadian forage species such as Beaver, Peace, Rambler and Trek alfalfa, Revenue slender wheatgrass, Orbit tall wheatgrass, Carlton bromegrass and Climax timothy to increase yield. These varieties provided good production results in trials on the farm.

Impressed by rotational grazing systems used in Alberta, the Chinese agriculturists asked livestock specialist Rob Hand to help establish a similar system at Qiqihar. Managers also adopted new technology being used in Alberta to benefit their livestock production.

David Wong, Alberta Agriculture's senior trade director responsible for the Pacific/Asia region, says while the objectives of the first four-year project have been met, a new three-year agreement is in place.

"The new agreement, signed in late 1987 during Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga's Asia mission, will have a new emphasis," says Wong. "Future projects will emphasize increased trade between Alberta and Heilongjiang in such commodities as livestock, forage seed, technology and management.

"Future trade prospects are encouraging, although trade with China can be difficult because of their lack of foreign exchange which reduces their ability to purchase goods and services.

"Alberta has been pleased to be part of the exchange program over the past four years and we look forward to a new trade relationship. And as has been demonstrated, the Chinese are also appreciative of the assistance they have received."

Wong says it is possible Alberta will be able to play a further role in a new economic development plan recently announced by the Chinese central government.

The Three Rivers Plains project in the northeast area of Heilongjiang province is designed to develop the region's agricultural, forestry and industrial potential.

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Contact: David Wong
427-4241

September 19, 1988
For immediate release

Forages to the rescue

Many Alberta farmers faced with soil salinity are planting more than 10 per cent of their land to forages in order to combat the problem says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Hank Vander Pluym says a recent survey indicates participants of the Dryland Salinity Investigation Service (DSIS) planted an average of 18 acres of forage per salt affected quarter section.

The soil salinity specialist says the 18 acres were split between 13 acres of salt tolerant grasses and five acres of alfalfa. The alfalfa is planted on the recharge area, which is free of salts.

The salinity investigation service was created by the provincial and federal departments of agriculture in 1985 to identify for farmers the degree and source of the soil salinity problem on their land. As well the service recommends management changes to control or reduce the spread of salinity. One of the leading recommendations is to seed crops which consume large amounts of ground water.

Although the dryland salinity investigations normally recommend a higher ratio of alfalfa per acre of salt infected land than what the recent survey shows is actually being planted, Vander Pluym says most farmers are doing their best.

The recommendations normally call for about two acres of alfalfa to be seeded in the recharge area, for every one acre of salt affected land.

"At present, farmers are reluctant to commit that many acres of good land to alfalfa," he says. "The main reason is the dry conditions. Establishment of alfalfa has been difficult in the last few years and yields were down. Under normal rainfall conditions, however, alfalfa will show net returns that compare favorably to traditional dryland crops."

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Alfalfa is strongly recommended by the Alberta Dryland Salinity Control Association as a preventive dryland salinity control measure. The 150-farmer member association, which first started in Warner county and now has gone province-wide, says there are several benefits to using alfalfa in preventing salinity.

The deep-rooted alfalfa utilizes all of the precipitation and much of the excess soil moisture that brings the salt to the surface. It also rebuilds the level of organic matter and nutrients in the soil.

The association strongly also promotes the Dryland Salinity Investigation Service which so far has been used by 259 farmers on 483 quarter sections.

Initially most applications for the service came from farmers in southern Alberta, although now a greater number of applications have been received from central Alberta.

Investigation reports involving 334 salt affected quarter sections have now been completed and distributed to farmers.

Vander Pluym says it is important for farmers in all areas of Alberta to take action to control the spread of soil salinity.

"As more farmers become involved and take steps to search out the cause of the problem and make management changes to reverse the trend we can begin to win the war against salinity," he says.

For more information, please contact Hank Vander Pluym, section head, conservation and development branch, Edmonton, 422-4385.

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Contact: Hank Vander Pluym
422-4385

Study compares pelvic area to calving difficulty

An Alberta Agriculture specialist is trying to determine if measuring the pelvic area of replacement heifers before they are bred will give a reliable indication of the animal's calving ability.

Dr. Laura Rutter, a reproductive physiologist with the department in Edmonton, is conducting a study involving about 1,000 heifers in north central Alberta to determine whether this early pelvic measurement can be used to predict calving difficulty.

Rutter says the study funded by Farming for the Future may be able to set some minimum standards for pelvic size which will serve as guidelines for breeding and culling programs. However, she notes any guidelines won't completely eliminate calving difficulty - the major cause of calf death loss in first-calf heifers.

"In general producers shouldn't regard pelvic area guidelines as the end of calving difficulty or dystocia," says Rutter. "Only about one of 10 heifers that experience calving problems does so because of a small pelvis."

As an example, she says a producer with a 100-cow breeding herd who calves out 25 heifers each year as replacements may have had 20 per cent or about five heifers with calving problems. There is only a 50:50 chance that one of these heifers had dystocia due to a small pelvis.

But the specialist says if guidelines can be established which can save a producer the cost of even one caeseraen section, the work will be worth it.

Pelvic area is measured during an internal examination by a veterinarian using a special instrument which physically measures the height and width of the pelvic opening.

It is just one of the physical characteristics researchers have been studying for years to determine a reliable means of predicting calving difficulty in heifers. She says while pelvic area may be one factor affecting calving difficulty, it is not the major cause of problems.

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"Research has found that the most important factor related to calving difficulty is calf birth weight, which accounts for about 40 per cent of the variation in dystocia scores," says Rutter.

"However, since calf birthweight is not easy to predict, producers and researchers have repeatedly tried to identify measurements which could be used to predict whether a particular heifer would likely experience calving problems.

"These measurements have included heifer weight, height, body condition score, pelvic area, slope of the rump and the angle of the pelvis."

Rutter says under research conditions, measuring the pre-calving pelvic area (about a month before calving) appears to be best indicator of the variables in the dam which influence calving ease. But taking this measurement within 30 days of calving isn't of much value to the commercial cattleman attempting to avoid calving problems.

She says although pelvic area measurements taken before breeding season have been promoted as a guide to culling, the value of this practice has never been proven. She says by using the limited information available, there is a risk of culling good heifers.

It is known, for example, that two heifers with about the same size of pelvic area can have two different sized calves without experiencing calving difficulty.

So what is a threshold pelvic area measurement? By working with Alberta producers this year, Rutter hopes to establish some minimum guidelines.

She cites the work of Dr. G.H. Deutscher of Nebraska who has also been studying pre-breeding measurement of pelvic areas.

"Deutscher has recommended that heifers with small pre-breeding pelvic areas be bred to low birth-weight bulls, while heifers with large pre-breeding pelvic areas could be bred to average birthweight bulls.

"According to Deutscher, this strategy would reduce calving problems in heifers with small pelvic areas and enable a producer to take advantage of the higher growth potential of large birthweight bulls in heifers with larger pelvic areas."

(Cont'd)

Deutscher has attached some numbers to the terms "small" and "large" pelvic areas, but these may be different between breed types and Alberta management conditions.

Based on the pre-breeding pelvic area, Rutter hopes to establish a range of calf birthweights that the heifer will be able to deliver without assistance. These guidelines would give farmers the option of culling heifers or breeding them to a bull of appropriate birthweights.

Farmers participating in the Alberta study include members of the Pembina, West Central and Valleyview forage associations and farmers in the Vermilion and Tofield areas. The study involves British, Continental and crossbred-type heifers.

Weight, body condition, height and pelvic area measurements were taken from some of the animals prior to breeding this spring, and similar information will be collected from other animals during fall pregnancy checks and just before calving.

Rutter will use the information to estimate the growth of the pelvis and predict the maximum size calf each heifer should be able to deliver without assistance. The final test will come at calving time when the predictions are compared to actual calving performance.

"It is hoped the results of this relatively comprehensive study conducted under Alberta conditions will help a cow-calf producer determine the best breeding management and culling procedures for his replacement heifers," says Rutter.

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Contact: Dr. Laura Rutter
427-5304

Information directory available from Olds

An updated Alberta Agriculture publication which lists sources of farm management information is only available from the department's farm business management branch in Olds.

The publication, "Sources of Printed Farm Management Information from Alberta Agriculture", provides a listing of printed material from Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch, production economics branch, market analysis branch and farm business management branch.

Also included is information on the department's print media branch and its "Publication List" - the main listing for most publications from Alberta Agriculture.

Most of the publications are free to farmers, but a few are being charged for and subscription rates are shown where applicable. Mailing addresses and telephone numbers of the branches are also provided.

The department provides a wide range of information on virtually all aspects of crop and livestock production and managing the farm business.

The production economics branch provides information about the economics of producing crops, livestock, dairy, poultry and also transportation of products.

The statistics branch provides reliable timely and comprehensive statistics related to agriculture, to the department, other government agencies, agri-business and the public.

The market analysis branch provides market news, analysis and outlook for farmers and agri-business.

The print media branch writes, edits, designs and publishes the agriculture department's extension and promotional publications as well as factsheets and production manuals. It provides a list of all available publications.

(Cont'd)

The farm business management branch provides training and resource support to district and regional staff and leadership to provincial farm business management programs. The programs are designed to assist farmers in improving decision making. The branch prepares many publications on methods of using available information from all sources to improve farm viability.

The information directory, "Sources of Printed Farm Management Information from Alberta Agriculture" is available by writing to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

For immediate release

Predators used to keep insect pests in check

While Encarsia formosa and Amblyseius cucumeris probably will never become household words for most Albertans, to provincial greenhouse operators they can be the solution to some chronic pest management problems.

The Latin names refer to two of the predators used extensively by Alberta growers to biologically control insect pests in greenhouses.

Biological control is the technical term for the old theory that's its good to have Ladybugs around the garden. It means using natural enemies to keep harmful insect pests under control.

By introducing predators or parasites (including Ladybugs) which themselves are no threat to the crop, greenhouse operators can maintain or increase production while minimizing the use of pesticides.

Biological control agents haven't completely eliminated the need for chemicals, says Art Tellier, an entomology technologist with the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks, but more operators are using the tiny predators as a cost-effective and environmentally sound production tool.

Tellier, along with colleague Marilyn Steiner at the Alberta Environmental Centre at Vegreville, work with the industry to conduct tests on known or potential predators to see how they perform under Alberta production conditions.

The work involves acquiring the predators, monitoring their effectiveness in the greenhouse, determining the numbers needed to affect control, as well as documenting storage and reproduction capabilities.

Although biological control was a little known practice a few years ago, about 80 per cent of Alberta greenhouse vegetable producers now use the method to some degree.

"It substantially reduces the need for chemicals in vegetable production," says Tellier. "Many operators can avoid use of pesticides except if they are faced with a pest problem that flares up and quick control is needed.

(Cont'd)

"By reducing the use of chemicals, the greenhouse operator creates a safer environment to work in, there is less stress on the plants, and the natural, residue-free commodity becomes a more appealing vegetable product to a health conscious consumer."

As well, with more office and public buildings designed with interior plantscapes, biological control becomes a more convenient and accepted means of pest control.

As an added bonus, Steiner says biological control is more cost efficient for producers.

"Although buying the biological control agents can be expensive, our studies have shown producers who use biological control are ahead in dollars per square foot of production," she says. "There is a definite increase in yield which means a greater dollar return to the producer."

The specialists say the emphasis of the last few years has been on finding biological control agents for the greenhouse vegetable growers, although the natural insect predators are being used in floriculture production as well.

Steiner, an entomologist specializing in special crops, says it is an expanding area of research around the world. She says when a new pest problem arises she is able to check work being done by scientists in Canada, the United States, Europe and other countries to see if they are using biological control agents which may be effective.

Tellier says often the predators may be found in our own backyard.

As an example, he says trials are now being conducted on the Minute Pirate Bug which is found on alfalfa plants in Alberta, to see how well it works against the Western Flower Thrips. The thrips is a pest which can create serious production problems for greenhouse operators.

Tellier says producers are already using a predatory mite, Amblyseius cucumeris, against the thrips, but if the Minute Pirate Bug proves satisfactory it can be one more agent available to greenhouse operators.

(Cont'd)

Other commonly used predators include parasitic wasps, Encarsia formosa, to combat greenhouse whitefly; a predator mite, Phytoseiulus persimilis, used against the two-spotted spidermite; a mite, Amblyseius cucumeris, used against western flower thrips; and a midge, Aphidaletes aphidimyza and the common Ladybug, used against aphids.

Right now there is only one company in Western Canada producing biological control agents for sale to the greenhouse industry. Applied Bio-Nomics Ltd. of Sidney, B.C. is the largest researcher/producer of biocontrols in Canada.

Tellier says biological control is an expanding field which will continue to have a significant impact on the greenhouse industry. He says more operators will develop integrated pest management plans which will include a blend of biological control agents and pesticides in greenhouse production.

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Contact: Art Tellier
362-3391

Agri-News Briefs

DEADLINE FOR GREENFEED PROGRAM EXTENDED

Alberta farmers and ranchers planning to make use of the Canada/ Alberta Greenfeed Program now have until September 30, 1988 to make application. The program, announced in July by Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga was established to encourage production of livestock feed supplies for drought-inflicted areas of the Prairies, and to assist in soil conservation. Alberta farmers who planted annual feed crops for hay, silage or pasture between June 20 and July 31, 1988 are eligible to apply for a payment of $15 per acre. Eligible feed crops include wheat, oats, barley, rye, peas, canola, fababeans, millet, triticale, sorghum and sorghum-sudan and all annual grasses. To receive payment, a farmer must authorize inspection of feed crop land and the crop itself, harvested or in pasture. Applications will be accepted by local Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation offices up to Friday, September 30. For application forms, or more information contact your local Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation office.

ENCHANT FARMER NAMED ALBERTA NOMINEE

Randy Howg and his wife Virginia, of Enchant, a southern Alberta community between Brooks and Taber, has been named Alberta's representative for Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers award. The Howgs, who operate a 2,500 acre combination dryland and irrigated operation, will be in Calgary in late October to compete with six other nominees from across Canada for the national honor. The awards program is administered by the Canada Jaycees, hosted by the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede, and sponsored by the Bank of Montreal, John Deere Ltd. and Hoechst Canada Inc. Final judging for the award will be held October 28 with the decision announced at a noon reception October 29.

(Cont'd)

PROGRAM CAN IMPROVE DAIRY MANAGEMENT

Alberta dairy producers are urged to make the best use of the information provided through the Dairy Herd Improvement (DHI) program. Brian Rhiness, dairy production specialist with Alberta Agriculture, says by supplying complete and accurate input data through DHI each month, the producer will receive a wide range of information from which decisions can be made. The input data required includes information on individual cow production, breeding dates, calving dates and of course cow identification. Rhiness says the next most important step after supplying the information is knowing how to interpret the output data. To assist producers, the specialist has recently prepared a publication which shows how DHI can be used to assist in management decisions. Along with being of value to dairy farmers, the information will also assist veterinarians, nutritionists and other extension personnel to pinpoint problems. For more information on DHI and its uses contact a local DHI technician, regional dairy production specialist or district agriculturist. For a copy of the "Interpretation of DHI Information" factsheet (Agdex 410/43-5) write, Alberta Agriculture, the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

BOOKLET REVIEWS OAT PRODUCTION

Although the 1988 oat crop will soon be in the bin, Alberta farmers can use a recently updated publication from Alberta Agriculture in planning for the 1989 season. "Oats Production in Alberta" is a 12-page booklet prepared by the department's field crops branch in Lacombe. The booklet covers a wide range of information on just about all aspect of oat production and marketing. Topics include utilization, current markets, adaptation, diseases, insects, time of maturity, land selection, cultural practices, production practices in growing oats for grain and for fodder, oats for pasture and other special uses. For a copy of "Oats Production in Alberta" (Agdex 113/20-2) contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

AGRI-NEWS

September 26, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

For immediate release

Alberta Potato Marketing Board established

The Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council has announced the formation of the Alberta Potato Marketing Board, which will regulate the marketing of potatoes grown in the province of Alberta.

More than 100 potato farmers voted in a plebiscite last spring and decided in favor of the establishment of a board. Since then, the Agricultural Products Marketing Council, responsible for the regulation of provincial marketing boards, commissions and agencies, has held extensive discussions within the industry on the characteristics of the new board.

Marketing Council General Manager Ken Smith stated, "The plebiscite held last spring determined that a significant majority of concerned potato farmers wished to see a marketing board established for their industry. I am pleased to announce today that such a board has been put in place."

The primary responsibility of the Alberta Potato Marketing Board will be to set and regulate the minimum prices paid to producers for seed and table potatoes produced and sold in Alberta. In addition, the board will deliver market development programs, research projects and field services, administer the Advance Payment of Crops Act, and assume all other responsibilities and powers previously held by the Alberta Potato Commission. The board will not be empowered to restrict potato production, nor to set prices for potatoes sold to processors.

The Potato Marketing Board will include all members of the previous Alberta Potato Commission.

-30-

Contact: Ken Smith
General Manager
Alberta Agricultural
Products Marketing Council
Edmonton

Phone: (403) 427-2164

For immediate release

New species of black flies found in northeast Alberta

Provincial and federal agriculture officials are keeping tabs on a strain of black flies which appeared in northeast Alberta this summer to determine if the insect was making a rare appearance or is establishing itself as a new pest in the province.

BLACK FLY

Joe Shemanchuk, an entomologist with Agriculture Canada in Lethbridge, says there were several reports of a species of black fly which has not been found in Alberta before.

He says the fly - Simulium luggeri - has been an annual problem for livestock and humans alike in northcentral Saskatchewan for several years, but until now there have been no reports of it being found west of the Saskatchewan border.

Shemanchuk says the species found in the Lamont/Two Hills area is a different species than the black fly that has been a problem for years in the Athabasca region of Alberta.

"At this point, we're not sounding any alarm," he says. "It may have been just a one-year occurrence, but it's a pest we want farmers and others in the area to be alert to next spring.

"We're asking people to report any sightings and if possible to collect samples of the flies for positive identification."

The reports of this black fly species came from farms near Lamont, Andrew, Willingdon, Two Hills and Brouseau during June, July and August. There were also two other reports of black flies in the Devon area although there was no positive identification of the species.

Dr. Ali Khan an entomologist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton and Hugh Philip, with the Alberta Environment Centre in Vegreville are working with Shemanchuk to monitor the situation.

(Cont'd)

In some parts of the country black flies are a serious pest problem. In hilly or mountainous areas traversed by fast-flowing rivers they can be a nuisance to people as well as affect the health and productivity of animals.

The most spectacular outbreaks are those of the species, Simulium arcticum, from the Saskatchewan and Athabasca rivers which in three or four years out of 10 are severe enough to kill livestock.

Shemancuk says it is unclear why the S. luggeri has appeared in Alberta at this time.

"It is believed that these black flies came from the North Saskatchewan River," he says.

"This occurrence may be due to several reasons. It was either caused by a low river level due to the spring drought which provided conditions suitable for more vegetative growth in the river and improved breeding grounds for black flies. It may have resulted from improved water quality in the river, or it may mean the species is spreading upstream from breeding sites in Saskatchewan."

The specialists urge people in the north central Alberta region to be alert to the pests and report any problems to their nearest district agriculturist.

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Contact: Dr. Ali Khan 427-9051
Joe Shemanchuk 327-4561
Hugh Philip 632-6761

For immediate release

Horticultural congress planned for Edmonton

As many as 600 delegates representing Alberta's diverse horticulture industry are expected in Edmonton in early November for the second annual Alberta Horticultural Congress.

Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga is scheduled to open the November 3 to 5 event which will provide more than 35 seminars and workshops on a variety of subjects of interest to greenhouse and flower operators, and fruit and vegetable producers from across the province.

Speakers from Ohio, Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Alberta will be featured during the congress, which was held in Red Deer for the first time in 1987.

Along with the technical sessions, the congress will also host a major industry trade show featuring more than 75 booths representing nearly 60 manufacturers, suppliers and organizations.

Lloyd Hausher, an Alberta Agriculture specialist in Brooks, and a member of the congress organizing committee, says last year's response indicated tremendous support from the industry for this type of event.

The spokesman says six associations are involved in sponsoring the 1988 convention. They include the Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association, The Alberta Market Gardeners Association, The Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board, the Fruit Growers Society of Alberta, Flowers Canada (Alberta Region) and F.T.D. (District 12).

Anyone planning to attend the congress at the Coast Terrace Inn on Calgary Trail in Edmonton is urged to register before October 15 to qualify for registration fee discounts as well as an early-bird draw for a trip for two to Vancouver Island.

The congress kicks off November 3 with an opening address by Mr. Elzinga, followed by the internationally known keynote speaker, author and consultant Leland Van DeWall.

(Cont'd)

Over the next day and a half speakers will provide a variety of talks on all aspects of horticultural production. Topics will include basic plant physiology, new bedding plant varieties, biological control of crop pests, herbs and spices, hydroponics, marketing, an update on strawberry varieties, marketing of saskatoons, floral design and many others.

Along with the seminars, many of the sponsoring associations are also planning their own business meetings during the congress.

On the lighter side a banquet and fun casino has been planned for Friday November 4, with a dinner and dance arranged for Saturday November 5.

Two tours have also been arranged for November 5. Delegates will be able to visit local greenhouses and market gardens, and/or the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in northeast Edmonton.

For more information or registration forms contact:

Dave Gourlay, Chairman
Alberta Horticultural Congress
R.R. 2
Millet, AB
T0C 1Z0

or

Lloyd Hausher, Secretary
Alberta Horticultural Congress
Bag Service 200
Brooks, AB
T0J 0J0

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Contact: Lloyd Hausher
362-3391

For immediate release

Deadline nears for ordering shelterbelt trees

Rural landowners wanting to establish or upgrade shelterbelts on their farmsteads and fields are reminded November 1 is the deadline for ordering shelterbelt trees from Alberta Agriculture.

These trees, which are used to protect and enhance rural properties, are available for a nominal fee to farmers, ranchers and towns and villages.

An application fee of $25, which is not a deposit and is not refundable, must accompany the order.

Brendan Casement, supervisor of Alberta Agriculture's shelterbelt program says any district agriculturist or county agriculture fieldman has a complete list of trees and shrubs available for next year's planting, and can assist in the planning.

He says they also have an illustrated catalogue of shelterbelt trees and shrubs, which can be viewed to get an idea of their mature size and shape.

The specialist says people must consider their needs and conditions before ordering trees.

"Different trees and shrubs will behave differently on the same site," says Casement. "If the site is not well drained consider using such species as willow, poplar and white spruce.

"If the site is dry, caragana, green ash, and scots pine are suitable. Caragana, villosa lilac and green ash are recommended for slightly saline soil."

District agriculturists also have three pamphlets on shelterbelts available for distribution; one deals with the policy and the second on planting. The third publication covers the herbicides that can be used to control weeds in shelterbelts.

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Contact: Brendan Casement
472-6043

For immediate release

Structures specialist receives national award

A 25-year veteran of Alberta Agriculture has been honored with a national award for his work in developing and designing buildings and building systems of value to Alberta farmers.

Dennis Darby, farm structures engineer with the department in Lethbridge, was recently honored by the Canadian Society of Agricultural Engineering (CSAE).

Darby received the CSAE/Canadian Sheet Steel Building Institute Award which is presented to the CSAE member who "has produced outstanding work in the structural field in teaching, research, extension or industry".

The 1988 award cited Darby for his "significant contributions to structural design of Canada Plan Service plans, and of exemplary personal qualities of integrity and professionalism, attention to detail and enthusiasm."

The Canada Plan Service is a national service headquartered in Ottawa supported by all provinces which produces basic designs for farm structures. These plans are then adapted or modified by engineers such as Darby, to meet the specific needs of producers in each province.

During his career with Alberta Agriculture Darby has developed improved and functional building plans for facilities such as fruit and vegetable storage, high wall bunker silos, livestock housing, and structural components such as plate beams, foundations and framing details.

He has counselled farmers and contractors in many projects, particularly vegetable storage, bunker silos, tower silo foundations and greenhouses.

The specialist also provided leadership in development of home study courses on structures for farmers and of courses for farm building contractors and building material suppliers.

He has become an expert in application of research in snow and wind control to feedlots and farmsteads on the prairies and on design of roof trusses for prairie conditions.

(Cont'd)

Along with several extension factsheets, Darby has authored three major bulletins.

On a national scale he has also served on several Canada Plan Service committees including an extended term on the CPS management committee.

His knowledge and experience were utilized when he was named to the Task Group on Farm Buildings of the Associate Committee of the National Building Code of Canada.

Darby began his career with a consulting engineering firm in Regina before moving to Edmonton in 1963 to become the assistant engineer with Alberta Agriculture.

In 1964 he was named the department's regional engineer for southern Alberta headquartered in Calgary. A year later he moved again to become the regional engineer for the new southern Alberta Agriculture region headquarter in Lethbridge.

Darby was appointed agricultural structures specialist in 1972.

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Contact: Dennis Darby
381-5114

For immediate release

Lawn needs to "harden off" before winter

In preparing the farmstead for winter, property owners shouldn't fertilize the lawn this fall, but they should make sure it is well watered before freeze up, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Pam North, a horticulturist with the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in northeast Edmonton, says lawns need time to "harden off" before winter and fertilizing in the fall could cause problems.

"Our recommendation on fertilizing is to make the last application no later than about the middle of August," says North. "Stopping at this time will give the lawn enough time to harden off before winter. Lawns that are kept actively growing in the fall may be damaged if we have an early winter with very cold temperatures."

The specialist says not to water the lawn as frequently as would be done in the summer because growth should be slowing down at this time of year.

She says if conditions are dry an occasional watering will be necessary to get moisture to the grass roots. If adequate rainfall isn't received, it is important to give the lawn a good watering just before freeze up to ensure adequate moisture is available to roots when growth resumes next spring.

The specialist says if the grass keeps growing it doesn't hurt to continue mowing, although it shouldn't be clipped too short. She says if the crowns of the grass are exposed as winter sets in, freezing damage could result, especially if there is inadequate snow cover.

A good guideline is to maintain a mowing height of four to five centimetres (1.5 to two inches).

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Contact: Pam North
472-6043

Agri-News Briefs

COURSES PLANNED IN SOUTHERN REGION

Lethbridge area farmers can participate in two Alberta Agriculture courses this fall designed to improve farm management skills. The first three-day course on Farm Record keeping will cover the principles of double entry record keeping, handling paperwork and application of records. Offered October 18, 19 and 20 at the Agriculture Centre on Jail Road, the course cost $10 per farm family. The second educational session is the popular Alberta Agriculture series called Gear Up Financially which runs for 10 Tuesdays from November 15 to February 21. This session planned at the Lethbridge Community College is just one of the Gear Up Financially courses offered by Alberta Agriculture district offices across the province. The course deals with helping producers understand the principles of sound financial management. Topics covered include learning about balance sheets, income statements, cash flow, personal finances and debt management. Cost of this course is $30 per farm family. To register for either of these courses contact district home economist Linda Barvir, at 381-5238 in Lethbridge. Registration deadline for Gear Up Financially is October 28.

PROTECT VEGETABLES FROM FROST

With fall here and frost soon to become a fact of life most nights in Alberta, gardeners should take steps to protect vegetable crops. Pam North, a horticulturist with Alberta Agriculture says beans, lettuce, tomatoes, potatoes, cucumbers, zucchini and other squash are the most sensitive to frost. She says while the potato tubers can be damaged if not protected by the soil, frost is actually needed to topkill the plants before harvest. Once the vines are dead, wait 10 to 14 days before harvesting to allow the potato skins to set and become firmer. Cabbage, brussel sprouts, kohlrabi, leeks and spinach are the most frost tolerant vegetable crops, while the flavor of kale, parsnips and rhutabagas is actually improved with exposure to low temperatures.

(Cont'd)

CONFERENCE PLANNED FOR CENTRAL ALBERTA FARM WOMEN

Farm women in central Alberta are invited to participate in a one-day conference November 3 designed to help make farm organizations more effective. "Farm Women Today" will show people now involved in a farm organization how to establish positions on an issue, how to develop policies and resolutions and how to network with other farm organizations. Co-ordinated by Alberta Agriculture the session will be held from 9:15 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the St. Mary's Anglican Church on 49th Avenue in Ponoka. Several speakers have been scheduled to speak during the day, with Holly Pidzarko, district home economist in Ponoka acting as conference chairman. Cost is $10 which includes lunch and child care can be arranged upon request. For more information or to register before the October 24 deadline contact the district home economists in Rimbey, Lacombe and Ponoka, or the regional home economist in Red Deer.

GERANIUMS ARE EASY TO OVERWINTER

Storing geraniums overwinter doesn't mean continuing the gardening season indoors, says a horticulturist with Alberta Agriculture. Pam North, at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre says the annual plants can be dug up and brought into the house before a heavy frost and kept with very little care until next spring. She says to place geraniums quite close together in a box or other container and cover the roots with potting soil or mixture of peat moss and vermiculite. Cut the plants back so only branch stubs remain. It is best to store them in a cool, dark location where the temperature ranges from four to seven degrees celsius. The stored plants should be well watered when first brought into the house and then watered lightly every so often over winter to prevent the plants from shrivelling. The soil should dry out completely between waterings. In February the geraniums should be placed in individual containers with good potting soil and placed in a south-facing, sunny window. They can be transplanted outside again once the risk of frost has passed. North says fuchsias can also be stored the same way.

(Cont'd)

FARM WOMEN'S CONFERENCE PLANNED IN PEACE REGION

The Peace River Region's annual Farm Women's Conference has been planned for November 17 and 18 in the town of Peace River this year. "Facing the Future with Pride" is the theme of the two-day event which will feature several speakers. Some of the select-a-session topics to be covered are entitled, Farm Rollovers and the Taxman, Mutual Support in Action, Marketing Options and Opportunities, Being on Your Own, In the 'St. Nick' of Time and Coping With Teens in Transition. With registration limited to 150 delegates anyone planning to attend is urged to register early. For more information or registration forms contact any of the Alberta Agriculture district home economists in the Peace River region.

LETHBRIDGE FOCUSES ON BREEDING TWO-ROW BARLEY VARIETIES

Progress is being made at the Agriculture Canada research station in Lethbridge to develop new varieties of two-row barley says the centre's barley breeder, Dr. K.W. May. Selections are being made to produce high-quality, high-yielding, disease-resistant barley varieties for irrigated and dryland farms in southern Alberta, he says. New varieties must meet the exact specifications set by the brewing industry and have superior yield potential on the farm. Along with breeding work, the centre also assists producers by evaluating quality characteristics, yield potential and disease resistance of new barley varieties released by other research organizations from across the prairies. Some of the evaluations include the new feed varieties such as Noble, developed by Alberta Agriculture specialists in Lacombe, Heartland, Duke and Deuce, which are now registered for sale. For more information on the two-row barley breeding program contact Dr. May at 327-4561 in Lethbridge.

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For immediate release

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Alberta
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Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

For immediate release

1988 harvest well ahead of five-year average

With about 70 per cent of the 1988 harvest complete by late September, Alberta farmers are a bit behind in their work compared to last year, but well ahead of the five year average.

An Alberta Agriculture specialist says farmers actually had a good jump on the season until about mid-September. And since then showers have delayed harvest in most parts of the province.

Crop statistician Michelle Timko says at this time last year harvest was about 90 per cent complete. However, the five-year average for Alberta shows the harvest at 55 per cent complete by late September.

Timko says except in the drier parts of southern and eastern Alberta where yields are low, reporting stations generally describe yields in the average to above-average range, with variable quality. She says green seed in canola is one problem showing up in many regions and rains have affected grain quality.

Looking at the six agricultural regions in Alberta, the specialist says much of the cereals and oilseeds have been harvested in the southern region headquartered in Lethbridge. Recent rainfall has prompted many farmers to seed winter wheat.

Special crops such as safflower, lentils, beans and silage corn are being harvested. Bean yields are up substantially. Dryland and irrigated wheat is expected to average 17 and 53 bushels per acre, respectively. Irrigated canola and flax are expected to yield 30 to 40 bushels per acre.

In the south central region headquartered in Airdrie, yields in the west are better than expected while in the east yields range from 25 bushels per acre and downward.

In the western districts yields range from 40 to 45 bushels for winter wheat, 30 to 35 bushels for wheat, 50 to 55 bushels for barley, 20 to 25 bushels for canola and 25 to 35 bushels for fall rye per acre.

(Cont'd)

In the north central region headquartered in Red Deer, crop maturity and expected yields vary within the region, averaging 35 bushels per acre for wheat, 75 bushels per acre for oats, 55 to 60 bushels for barley, 25 bushels for canola and flax, and 40 to 45 bushels per acre for field peas. Second cut hay is of excellent quality.

In the northeast region, headquarter in Vermilion yields also vary widely. Oat yields are averaging 65 to 70 bushels and wheat and fall rye 30 to 35 bushels per acre.

Wheat is of average quality and canola graded #2 and #3 with high dockage due to green seed. Barley bushel weights are light in many areas due to heat stress earlier in the year. The canola harvest is slightly ahead of other grains and there is a shortage of hay in eastern districts.

In the northwest region, headquartered in Barrhead, oats are average 85 bushels to the acre, barley 70 to 75 bushels, canola 20 to 30 bushels, and peas 40 to 50 bushels. Stations in the Edmonton area report wheat yields at about 50 bushels per acre.

In the Peace River region winter wheat and fall rye are averaging 30 to 35 bushels per acre, wheat 45 bushels, oats 85 to 90 bushels, barley 50 bushels and canola 20 bushels per acre.

Much of the wheat is grading #1 and some barley has been sold for malt. The exceptions are around Fairview where excess moisture has lowered barley and canola yields. There is excess hay in the region and fall tillage is beginning.

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Contact: Michelle Timko
427-4011

(Editor's Note: Although Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch produces a crop report every two weeks, this article is one of about three situation updates provided by Agri-News during the harvest season. The next report, sometime in October, will provide a wrap-up on the harvest with production estimates.)

For immediate release

New crop enemy reaches Alberta

Grain farmers, particularly in southern Alberta, are urged to be on the lookout for a new insect pest which has recently crossed into the province from the United States.

The Russian wheat aphid which has caused millions of dollars in damage to U.S. crops, was first sighted north of the border a few weeks ago. It has now been found as far north as Lethbridge, says an Alberta Agriculture entomologist.

Jim Jones, at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks says unless the aphid is killed by harsh winter conditions it has potential to quickly spread across most of the Canadian prairies next year. In Saskatchewan, the aphid has already been found 100 kilometres north of the Saskatchewan/Montana border.

In Alberta the insect has already been positively identified in the Counties of Lethbridge, Warner and 40 Mile.

Jones says southern Alberta farmers, with fall seeded grain crops, should be checking their fields for aphids every couple of days and be prepared to apply control measures as needed.

The specialist says early detection offers the best hope for reducing losses against the aphid which attacks wheat, barley and triticale crops.

By damaging host plants, the insect can produce significant crop losses and it is also believed to be a carrier of several cereal crop diseases.

He says although there is no specific insecticide registered for use against the Russian wheat aphid, dimethoate and malathion are registered for aphids on cereals.

Jones says farmers should walk through their fall-seeded crops - even stands that are just emerging - to determine if the yellow or white longitudinal streaks are present on the leaves.

(Cont'd)

The Russian wheat aphid damages small grains by injecting toxic saliva into the host plant and by sucking sap. Affected leaves develop streaks and begin to curl like a straw. Yield losses of 50 per cent and more were attributed to RWA the first year after it was found in Colorado.

Alberta specialists have been tracking the aphid's progress since it first reached the U.S. in 1986. The aphid which is native to southern Russia and the Mediterranean region, was found in South Africa in 1978.

Two years later, it was found for the first time in the western hemisphere, infesting wheat at a site near Mexico City. In 1986, it was found for the first time in the United States, in Texas, and by the end of 1987, it had invaded the Great Plains from New Mexico to Montana.

The insect which prospers under hot, dry conditions prefers wheat, barley and triticale as host plants. Rye and oats are less preferred and various grasses including bromes, wheat grasses, timothy and wild oats, also serve as hosts.

Jones says although the insect can reproduce during very cool spring and fall conditions, little is known about how the aphid will respond to the Canadian prairie climate. It is suspected that winter survival in Canada may be poor.

For more information on detection and control of the Russian wheat aphid contact the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office or regional crop specialist.

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Contact: Jim Jones
362-3391

For immediate release

Early detection key to Russian wheat aphid control

Alberta grain farmers are advised that early detection is the best defence against a small grains aphid which is just beginning its sweep across Western Canada.

Identifying the Russian wheat aphid and taking appropriate control measures early in the infestation should help minimize yield losses says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

The aphid which recently entered the province and has been found as far north as Lethbridge, prefers wheat, barley and triticale as host plants, says entomologist Jim Jones.

Rye and oats and various grasses, including bromes, wheat grasses, timothy and wild oats can also accommodate the pest.

The specialist says young fall seeded grain crops anywhere in southern Alberta are at risk of being attacked.

The aphid which damages crops by injecting toxic saliva into the plants and sucking sap, is also believed to be a carrier of cereal diseases such as barley yellow dwarf, brome mosaic and barley stripe. Insecticides registered for aphids on cereals can be used for control.

Jones, an entomologist at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks, says farmers should check newly emerging cereals about three times a week for streaking in the leaves.

The adult Russian wheat aphids are about two millimetres long and yellow-green or gray-green. The body is peculiarly spindle-shaped and can be distinguished from other aphids that commonly occur in cereals by the absence of prominent cornicles and by a projection above the last abdominal segment which gives the aphid a "forked-tail" appearance when viewed from the side.

Adults may be either winged or wingless. Immature forms (nymphs) resemble the adults but are smaller. Nymphs destined to become winged show prominent wing pads prior to maturity and have a broad-shouldered appearance. These individuals also have a slight orange to pinkish color in the area of the wing pads.

(Cont'd)

The pest is sometimes mistaken for the greenbug which is also yellow-green and feeds on cereals, however the Russian wheat aphid has short antennae and lacks a stripe down the middle of its back.

Jones says because conditions were good this year for aphids in general, samples of suspect insects should be taken to a district agriculturist for positive identification.

As is common for aphids, the Russian wheat aphid adult females give birth to living young. Two or three offspring per female per day can be produced during warm weather. Nymphs reach maturity in about one week but take longer under cool conditions.

Fall treatment, using a foliar insecticide, is recommended when 10 to 20 per cent of plants are infested.

A plant is considered infested when it has one or more aphids present. Newly emerged plants will begin to show yellow streaks in the leaves, a couple days after the aphids appear. With continued feeding the streaks will turn white and become very prominent.

There are a range of symptoms depending on the age of the crop and degree of infestation.

Infested leaves begin to discolor and curl, forming a tube which protects the aphid from predators, parasites and contact with insecticides. As well, pests are difficult to see during field examinations.

Older crops begin to discolor within three or four days with white, yellow or purple streaks travelling the entire length of the leaf.

In early plant growth stages, aphids cluster near the leaf axils and on the upper side of leaves. Later, aphids infest the flag leaf and at least some of the emerging heads become trapped in the boot and exhibit a bent head (fish hook) or white appearance, symptoms similar to frost injury.

In addition to leaves streaking and curling, the entire plant may take on a purplish cast, similar to the bluish appearance which plants assume during dry weather stress. Heavily infested plants may appear flattened with tillers lying almost parallel to the ground.

(Cont'd)

On younger or seedling plants, symptoms of leaf rolling may predominate, with the streaking effect being less pronounced. Dead spots ranging from one to six metres in diameter may appear in fields where aphids were abundant early in the season.

Jones says there are no insecticides registered specifically for Russian wheat aphid, however, dimethoate and malathion can be used. Once the aphid colonies become enclosed by the curled leaves, a plant systemic insecticide (dimethoate) is preferred.

For more information on detection and control of the Russian wheat aphid contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or regional crop specialist.

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Contact: Jim Jones
362-3391

For immediate release

Restaurant industry gets chance to Savor Alberta Flavor

The people who supply Alberta's restaurant owners with food, beverages and equipment took the spotlight in Edmonton recently in the largest trade fair of its kind in Alberta.

More than 360 companies and associations, some 48 of then from Alberta, displayed their products and services at the annual Alberta Restaurant and Food Services Association's, ARFEX '88.

The show which alternates annually between Calgary and Edmonton gives restaurant owners a chance to see what's new in food services and check out the latest in equipment and restaurant trends.

Decisions made here appear as new menu items, new furnishings or new technology which enables restaurants to provide improved variety and service to the public.

Brenda Lennox of Alberta Agriculture's market development division, who organized the Alberta section of the trade show, says the two-day event gives both new and established Alberta food processors a chance to develop domestic markets.

"The ARFEX show, which is always booked-up well in advance, is one of the premier opportunities for Alberta food processors and service industries to promote their products," says Lennox.

"The firms represented here include everything from one and two person operations which may market a single product to a very local market, to relatively large companies with sales across Canada and the United States. Many of these companies rely heavily on Alberta-grown agricultural commodities as basis for their finished products."

The Alberta section, organized under the "Savor Alberta Flavor" banner, included companies from across the province such as Agy's Antipasto Specialty Foods, Big Rock Brewery, Canbra Foods, Capital Packers Ltd., Drummond Brewing, European Cheesecake Factory, H.P.I. Beverages, Sunstream Honey Fruit, The Great West Cake Company and Wing's Foods of Alberta.

(Cont'd)

Brenda Lennox, left, of Alberta Agriculture's market development division talks with Diane Ho Lem, a representative of Wings Food Ltd. The Edmonton company manufactures the individual serving size packages of many sauces and other condiments used by the restaurant industry.

Ron Axelson and Eileen Stewart of the Alberta Restaurant and Food Service Association, check over the ARFEX '88 show program. The trade show for the restaurant industry was recently held in Edmonton.

(Cont'd)

Dominating the Alberta section were some 14 companies involved in some aspect of baking or desert making.

As well four producer associations were also represented at the 1988 show. They included the Alberta Egg and Fowl Marketing Board, the Alberta Milk Fed Veal Growers Association, Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board and the Alberta Turkey Growers in co-operation with the Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency.

During the show restaurant owners, product brokers and others involved in food processing could tour the different booths, meet with owners or representatives of the companies and taste product samples.

It is hoped through this contact food processors will establish new contacts and markets and the restaurant industry will be able to expand or improve its service to customers.

Eileen Stewart of Edmonton, office manager of the restaurant and food service association who co-ordinated the ARFEX show, and Ron Axelson, the association's executive director say the show is important for all sectors of the food service industry.

"For those attending the show it is an opportunity to learn what new products are available and see the new trends which will affect the restaurant industry," says Stewart. "As well its a good learning experience. During the two days there are several seminars given by experts in business management, marketing, food preparation and customer service."

Axelson, who directs the operations of the 400 member association, says he is impressed by the sophistication of the Alberta displays.

"Here in the middle of national and international companies we have a block of Alberta food processors and no one can look at us and say we are the poor cousins," he says.

"Our presentations are very sophisticated and professional. We are right in step with even the largest companies. And I believe this sophistication is also reflected by the restaurant industry."

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Contact: Brenda Lennox
427-4241

New index of farm building plans available

Farmers looking for building plans on virtually every type of farm structure or livestock handling system should look to Alberta Agriculture's building plan service for ideas and blueprints.

The plan service, co-ordinated by Dennis Darby of Lethbridge, the provincial farm structures engineer, has just published its most recent directory of building plans available from the department.

The two-page factsheet, which includes an order form, lists the titles of more than 250 building items covering eight major farming enterprises.

Designs are available for beef cattle housing, dairy cattle housing, swine housing, sheep housing, poultry housing, fruit and vegetable buildings, grain, forage and feed storage, special structures such as barns for riding horses or farm workshops, and a building engineering category.

Along with plans for actual buildings, the service also provides designs for a wide range of equipment and building components including loading chutes, feed carts, farrowing stalls, shearing tables, poultry nests, ventilation systems, feed bins and many others.

Darby says the Alberta Agriculture Plan Services is comprised mainly of plans from the Canada Plan Service (CPS), a joint federal-provincial agency.

"The CPS plans are supplemented by a few 'made in Alberta' plans designed for our conditions or to meet regional needs such as two new plans for bee wintering buildings," says Darby.

"The central design and drafting office for CPS is in Ottawa, however much of the planning and policy work is shared by a unique engineering team from all provinces."

The major production work is directed by technical committees comprised mostly of engineers with some other agricultural experts, representing all critical regions in Canada. Alberta has representation on eight of the nine CPS technical committees.

(Cont'd)

Master CPS plans are checked in Alberta for functional and structural serviceability. Most are used as they are, however a few are modified to meet Alberta needs.

As an example, Alberta engineers have added hot water heating details to CPS swine barn plans that otherwise would show electric heat.

"It is a challenge for the plan service to keep current," says the engineer. "A major overhaul of plans was made this past year to revise all wood rafter and beam loads to comply with the latest wood design code.

"We have also added a whole package of new ventilation components and management leaflets. These modern ventilation details were just added to our set of swine barn plans."

Darby says farmers can obtain the plans free of charge. The blueprints can be used as is, or modified by producers to meet their specific building needs.

Copies of the Farm Building Plan Service index (Agdex 713-1) are available from Alberta agriculture district offices, regional engineering specialists or by writing the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Dennis Darby
381-5114

For immediate release

Farmers urged to check hoses on anhydrous ammonia equipment

Alberta farmers are urged to check and in some cases replace hoses on their anhydrous ammonia fertilizer applicators this fall to avoid serious eye and skin injuries.

An Alberta Agriculture engineer in Airdrie, says one hose manufacturer recommends farmers replace all hoses of a particular model they made. And Murray Green, farm machinery engineer, says all equipment should be checked for breaks, leaks or poor connections.

"As farmland is cleared of this year's crop, plans are being made to apply fertilizer this fall," says Green. "One of the common types of fertilizer which will be used is anhydrous ammonia (NH3). Anhydrous ammonia requires careful handling because it is highly toxic, causing serious burns if it comes in direct contact with a person's skin or eyes."

He says inhaling NH_3 in large quantities is also not desirable although the occasional "whiff" is considered part of the job.

To reduce the potential for accidental contact with NH_3, Green says equipment must be checked before going to the field this fall. Hoses carrying the high pressure liquid NH_3 are most susceptible to rupturing without warning, causing a serious hazard to operators and bystanders.

The condition of hoses depends on their age and abuse from operating conditions. Any evidence of cracked or peeled outer casing, or cuts and worn spots on hoses, should be corrected.

Green says the Gates Rubber Company, a hose manufacturer, has appealed to all users of their hose marked 73B-HB, to immediately replace it.

That hose was to be kept in service for not more than two and a half years, which is now long past. For more information about Gates' hose call them collect at (303) 744-5539.

(Cont'd)

Farmers urged to check hoses on anhydrous ammonia equipment (cont'd)

"Many operators of anhydrous ammonia application equipment replace the hoses on a regular basis," says the machinery engineer. "This reduces possible down time as well as potential injuries."

When checking hose condition, release the pressure from that particular line, and let it completely drain. Bending or twisting a damaged or cracked hose may actually cause the failure which would allow the escape of high pressure anhydrous ammonia.

For more information on checking hoses on application equipment contact Murray Green in Airdrie at 948-8525.

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Contact: Murray Green
948-8525

Agri-News Briefs

MINI CONFERENCE PLANNED FOR PEACE RIVER AG SOCIETIES

Agricultural societies in the Peace River region are urged to take part in a two-day mini conference to be held in Grande Prairie in early November. The session sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies will be held at Evergreen Park. The November 4 and 5 program will include workshops and seminars on administration requirements, the Western Canada Lottery Foundation, forming effective executives and how to recruit and keep volunteers. There will also be an update on what other agricultural societies are doing. As well on November 5 their will be a day-long workshop on the Canada Packers Quilt competition for judges convenors and quilt exhibitors. For more information or to register before the October 15 deadline contact Louise Welsh at Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton at 427-2171.

PORK PRODUCERS SHOULD THINK ABOUT BUILDING MANAGEMENT

A new Alberta Agriculture publication lists some of the key points pork producers should think about when designing or managing their hog barns which will help reduce stress on the animals and improve production. The newly revised chapter of the Alberta Pork Production Handbook discusses five key areas of building management where problems can occur. These include designing or managing a building to avoid overcrowding of animals; designing feed and manure handling systems to be as labor saving as possible so more time is available for other management aspects; designing heating and ventilation systems to meet needs and avoid having damaging effects on building components and health of animals; designing the moving and loading system for hogs so that one person can handle the work; and designing construction or remodelling plans to consider future expansion or alternate uses of the structure. Producers planning to build or remodel are welcome to contact the regional swine specialist or regional agricultural engineer for plans, ideas and information.

(Cont'd)

4-H LEADERS CONFERENCE PLANNED FOR RED DEER

The 47th annual 4-H Leaders' conference will be held at the Red Deer Lodge, January 13 to 15. This conference gives leaders, resource people, staff and special guests the opportunity to participate in a variety of structured and informal activities that will help the participants develop new leadership and program skills.

FARM WOMEN'S NETWORK CONFERENCE IN JANUARY

After a successful first-time effort earlier this year, The Alberta Farm Womens' Network will hold their second conference at the Capri Centre in Red Deer in late January 1989. The theme will be "Farm Women: The Visible Link in Agriculture. Current interests and issues such as international trade and marketing, gender equity in farm organizations and marketing from the farmyard gate will be covered. The conference which runs January 25 to 27 will close with a luncheon and recognition of the farm woman of the year. The AFWN will honor a deserving farm woman for contributions made to her community, leadership in organizations and dedication to the farm community and her family. Nominations close November 30. For more information on the conference contact AFWN at 469-1254, Donna Graham at 485-6384 or Faye Mayberry at 886-4129.

PUBLICATION DEALS WITH RABBIT CONTROL

Property owners looking for ways to control rabbits and hares which often cause injury to orchards, nurseries, shelterbelts and gardens, should obtain a copy of a recently released Alberta Agriculture publication. The factsheet gives some biological background to the three species of rabbits and hares found in Alberta - the Cottontail Rabbit, the Snowshoe hare and the White-tailed Jackrabbit. It describes control measures such as removal, trapping, and snaring, use of repellents and ways to exclude the pests from susceptible trees. The publication also contains plans for live traps and protective devices. For a copy of "Control of Rabbits and Hares" (Agdex FS684-12) contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
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October 10, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

For immediate release

Alberta companies honored for export achievements

Four companies involved in developing export markets for Alberta agricultural products have been honored by the provincial government.

The four were among 17 firms in the province to receive Export Achievement Awards sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and Alberta Economic Development and Trade.

Centennial Packers Ltd. of Calgary, Fletcher's Fine Foods Ltd. of Red Deer, Prairie West Livestock of Red Deer and Cantriex Livestock International Inc. of Ponoka, were among those honored at a recent ceremony in Edmonton held as part of Export Month activities.

Shirley Cripps, Alberta's associate minister of agriculture, recognized the efforts of not only the award winners but expressed her "appreciation of the vital contribution made to this province by all Alberta exporters."

"We salute all those working throughout the province to increase the level of Alberta business activity abroad, to introduce new products to our export markets and to prenetrate new markets for Alberta goods, services and technology."

Alberta's overall export sales totalled $24 billion in 1987 and the agriculture sector alone contributed some $1.8 billion to that figure.

"If I may be excused for showing a little bias on the subject," she told the recent dinner, "I will note that Alberta's agriculture industry has been particularly adept at finding new markets for our products, and at carving out a share of those markets for our agricultural producers and processors."

Mrs. Cripps said Alberta Agriculture is pleased with the results acheived by the co-operative marketing effort between the department and agribusiness, but stressed that more progress can be made.

(Cont'd)

The Associate Minister stated, "We must take every opportunity to expand our activities in market development. We must apply ourselves with determination to the discovery of new markets for Alberta products and to carving out a share of those markets for our producers and processors."

Centennial Packers Ltd., a meat packing plant in Calgary in the over-50 employee category won the award for new markets.

Centennial produces and markets beef and beef products, exporting under the widely recognized "Alberta Beef" symbol.

The company's slaughter plant is one of a minority in Canada approved by the European Economic Community, facilitating exports to Holland, Italy, France and the U.K.

In 1986, Centennial scored an export marketing coup with the first major shipment of Alberta beef to Hong Kong, and has recently signed a contract to ship 100,000 kilograms to Japan. Both these markets had traditionally been supplied by the U.S. and Australia.

Centennial credits adaptation to the specific demands of its markets for its recent successes.

The company has been chosen as the exclusive supplier of beef to the Canadian entry in this year's World Culinary Olympics in West Germany. Since 1985, export sales have risen by nearly 400 per cent.

Fletcher's Fine Foods Ltd. also in the over-50 employee category won the export marketing award.

After years of effort, Fletcher's made a breakthrough last year in its western U.S. marketing campaign when it became the only Canadian meat company to have achieved steady business in Hawaii.

Sales in Arizona jumped by almost nine times in 1987, reflecting the success of careful market analysis and custom design of the Fletcher's product line, including development of a new product exclusively for export.

A major market survey recently showed Fletcher's in fifth place in name recognition in the bacon category, just behind Oscar Meyer and ahead of 16 other brands. Recent strong export growth continued in 1987, with a 23 per cent increase in sales, bringing exports to almost 40 per cent of Fletcher's' total sales, from under six per cent in 1981.

(Cont'd)

Prairie West Livestock, in the under-50-employees category won the award for export results.

With a permanent Alberta staff of just two, Prairie West has become the largest exporter of purebred cattle in western Canada.

Despite stiff competition from the U.S., the company has achieved a strong presence in Mexico and South America through a policy of sincere follow-up after each sale.

Consulting services cover nutrition, selection, management and registration for international clients. The company has made effective use of innovative financing, adapting the 60-day letters of credit common in other industries to its own field.

Export sales have nearly tripled since 1985, accounting for nine per cent of total sales last year.

Cantriex Livestock International Inc. also in the under-50-employee category won the award for export financing.

Cantriex has built a reputation for innovative financing for its export sales of beef cattle and horses. Through the use of forward contracts against the futures market, the company has maintained strong sales in the increasingly competitive Alberta and U.S. markets.

Cantriex also uses U.S. futures markets to pre-book U.S. dollars coming in from export sales, allowing the company to lock in profits and make reliable forecasts of profitability.

In addition, the company last year negotiated a sale of draft horses to Japan, and was short-listed for a contract to provide beef cattle to the Egyptian armed forces.

During the first six months of 1988, Cantriex recorded more sales than in any full year previously.

It is expected those firms that were runners-up in 1987 will be strong contenders for Alberta Export Awards in 1988.

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Contact: Brenda Lennox
427-4241

October 10, 1988
For immediate release

Three specialists join marketing division

Alberta Agriculture has named three new people to its market development team, signalling a continued emphasis in promoting Alberta commodities and processed food products in local, national and international markets.

DE LEEUW

THOMSON

The three, with extensive career experience in food processing and marketing, are part of the overall drive to expand markets for Alberta's value-added products.

Arnold de Leeuw, who most recently served in Ottawa as chief of trade policy within Agriculture Canada's trade policy division, has been named senior trade director for the Americas.

de Leeuw, who replaces Lou Normand who was last year named head of the agri-food and processing development branch, has overall responsibility for department trade efforts in North, Central and South America.

HAYWARD

Assisting de Leeuw with part of that responsibility is Gaylene Thomson, who has worked closely with Alberta food processors and the agricultural industry for more than 15 years.

She has been named trade director responsible for Alberta, B.C., the west coast of the United States, Alaska and Hawaii.

Reporting to Thomson is Dianne Hayward, who has worked with Alberta's agricultural food processing industry for more than 10 years.

(Cont'd)

In her new post as associate trade director with the market development division, Hayward will be responsible for marketing efforts in Alberta and Washington state, and will work closely with food retailers in British Columbia.

In announcing the appointments, Cliff Wulff, executive director of market development, says the three specialists bring to their positions a comprehensive expertise covering trade policy, food processing, product development and marketing.

de Leeuw, born in Holland, came to Canada as an infant and was raised and educated in British Columbia. For most of his career he has worked for federal government departments including Agriculture Canada, Industry Trade and Commerce and the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion.

He has held various posts within the departments, although all were related to agriculture, food processing, or agricultural trade policy. He was also posted to Australia for two years, working for Canada's trade commission service reporting on agricultural matters.

Prior to joining Alberta Agriculture he was involved with Agriculture Canada's trade policy division. Specifically de Leeuw was part of the task force which provided input into Canada/U.S. Free Trade negotiations.

He also helped develop Canada's position on agricultural trade policy as it relates to GATT's multi-lateral trade negotiations.

Gaylene Thomson, who was born in Manitoba and has lived in Alberta since 1955, has been with Alberta Agriculture since 1973.

The trade director began her career with the former food marketing branch and in 1981 became project manager for the branch's Emononton office in 1981. From 1983 until this most recent appointment she has been manager of the processed food development section in the marketing services division.

Dianne Hayward, who was born and raised in Alberta, has held several positions related to marketing within Alberta Agriculture during her career.

Prior to joining the department she was involved with the hospitality industry in England, and spent two years with an agricultural research institute in Australia.

Contact: Arnold de Leeuw 427-4241
Gaylene Thompson 427-4241
Dianne Hayward 427-4241

Good advice for cleaning and storing sprayers

Some fairly easy and practical steps can be followed to clean and prepare pesticide spraying equipment for winter storage says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Terry Footz, an equipment specialist with the department's crop protection branch, says a thorough cleaning of the sprayer will prevent damage to crops that are sensitive to previously used chemicals.

And correct cleaning and storage procedures will extend the effective life of the sprayer.

Footz says checking the sprayer while cleaning it in the fall will also allow farmers time to order any needed parts well in advance of the next spraying season.

The specialist lists 10 steps to follow in cleaning equipment:

1. Drain sprayer completely and flush with clean water.
2. Circulate some diesel fuel and spray out through nozzles.
3. Rinse entire sprayer with a solution of 1 kg detergent per 100 litres of water to remove the diesel.
4. Rinse the sprayer with clean water and drain.
5. Drain the sprayer completely and partially fill the tank with a solution of 1 part household ammonia for every 100 parts of water used. Circulate the solution throughout the entire sprayer and leave in tank for 12 to 24 hours.
6. Spray out and drain completely, including booms.
7. Rinse the sprayer with clean water and drain completely, especially booms with no drip features on nozzles.
8. The entire sprayer should be flushed with an automobile antifreeze containing a rust inhibitor which provides a protective coating.
9. Drain the pump and plug the ports to prevent air or debris from entering the pump.
10. Seal all openings in the sprayer to keep it clean.

(Cont'd)

Footz notes the steps for cleaning the sprayer between chemical changes or as a final cleanup in the fall, can be adjusted depending on the chemical being used.

For cleaning "ester" formulation chemicals start at Step #1. For cleaning "amine" or "salt formulation" chemicals start at Step #4 and for cleaning out "Ally" or "Glean" use chlorine bleach instead of household ammonia.

Polyethylene tanks should be stored under cover to prevent deterioration from sunlight, and filters, screens and nozzles should be cleaned with compressed air.

Footz urges farmers to choose their cleaning area carefully. He says to make sure cleaning water will not contaminate streams, wells, dugouts or underground water courses, and ensure solutions are not accessible to children and livestock.

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Contact: Terry Footz
427-7098

October 10, 1988
For immediate release

New DAs appointed in Falher and Fairview

Two University of Saskatchewan graduates have been appointed district agriculturists in Alberta Agriculture's Peace River region.

Kimber Mader and Blair McClinton, who both graduated from the U of S with bachelor of science degrees have accepted DA positions in Falher and Fairview, respectively.

Their appointments were recently announced by John Knapp, Alberta Agriculture's Peace Region director.

Mader, replaces Marvin Nakonechny as DA in Falher, while McClinton will be taking over from Nora Paulovich in Fairview.

KIMBER MADER

Mader, who received a bachelor of science degree majoring in agronomy in 1988 was raised on a large southern Saskatchewan grain farm with an intensive farrow to finish hog operation.

While in university he worked in research and marketing for Hoechst Canada throughout Saskatchewan. After graduation he worked for Cargill as farm centre manager in Raymore, Saskatchewan.

Mader says he welcomes the opportunity to assist farmers and agribusiness in the Municipal District of Smoky River.

Blair McClinton, who received his B.Sc. specializing in mechanized agriculture and continuing education in 1985, will work as co-district agriculturist with Dale Seward.

McClinton was raised on a mixed dairy and grain farm in southern Saskatchewan.

BLAIR MCCLINTON

(Cont'd)

Following university, he worked as a district sales manager for a farm implement manufacturer for one year. He has been co-manager of his family's farm for the past two years. He also was a sales representative for a water treatment company.

McClinton says he is looking forward to meeting the needs of the farming community in the Fairview district.

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Contact: Kimber Mader 837-2211

Blair McClinton 835-2241

October 10, 1988 10

For immediate release

November 1 deadline for research proposals

The provincial government's largest source of funding for agricultural research and demonstration projects is making a call for proposals for the 1988-89 program year.

Farming for the Future, an agricultural research program funded by the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, advises that proposals under its two funding mechanisms are now being accepted.

Under the more formal research component, agricultural researchers have until November 1 to make application for funds.

Under the on-farm demonstration component producers and farm organizations can submit proposals for projects primarily oriented to demonstrating and/or testing agricultural technology generated by Farming for the Future and other programs. Proposals for on-farm demonstrations are accepted on a year-round basis.

Research program proposals must be submitted, by the deadline, on 1988 application forms and awards will be subject to the revised 1988 terms of reference.

On-farm demonstration proposals are reviewed on a year-round basis and should be directed to an Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist, home economist or regional/district specialist.

For a copy of the terms of reference or application forms contact:

Farming for the Future
Research Division
Alberta Agriculture
#202 J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

or call (403) 427-1956

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Contact: Dr. Yilma Teklemariam
427-1956

For immediate release

Fall herbicide application kills weeds, helps protect soil

For less than $2 an acre farmers can achieve weed control on their fields this fall and help protect their soil at the same time.

Alberta Agriculture specialists says now is the time to check stubble and summerfallow fields for winter annual weed growth and apply a herbicide.

Dan Cole, with the department's crop protection branch in Edmonton says using 2,4-D herbicide before freeze-up will help control winter annuals such as stinkweed, shepherd's-purse and flixweed, while at the same time reducing the vigor of some perennial weeds.

John Timmermans, of Airdrie with the department's conservation and development branch says, the 1988 drought creates an even greater need to protect soil from erosion by maintaining crop residue. A fall application of herbicide will provide economical resource conservation.

"If weather conditions permit, 2,4-D amine or ester at 360 - 480 millilitres per acre (6-8 oz/ac active ingredient) of 2,4-D 500 (approximately 500 g/L or 50% formulation) applied before the end of October will control winter annuals," says Cole. "And using 2,4-D amine 500 will cost $1.30 to $1.80/acre at these rates."

He says some suppression of perennial weeds such as Canada thistle may be obtained at the same time if the perennial weeds are green and healthy.

The supervisor of integrated weed control says winter annual weeds may be sprayed at any time in the fall as long as the sprayer nozzles and lines don't freeze.

If applied very late in the fall, there may be enough 2,4-D residue in the soil to affect canola, field pea or lentil emergence in the spring.

"Winter annual weeds are more vulnerable to 2,4-D in the fall than in the spring," he says. "The seeds germinate in the fall and the plants start to develop a root system that will carry them through the winter and allow them to grow again as soon as the snow melts in the spring.

(Cont'd)

"In the spring, the winter annuals grow quickly and become more resistant to the spray. They are also drawing moisture out of the soil."

Timmermans says along with protecting the soil from erosion, both time and money can be saved by applying a fall herbicide.

Advantages include:

- more crop residue as standing stubble is left to protect the soil from wind and water erosion and to trap snow to conserve moisture.
- at least one less tillage operation will be needed in the spring. This conserves more moisture for possible recropping in spring and results in better retention of crop residues to protect the soil from erosion. It also reduces the workload at seeding time and the problem of unpredictable weather and soil conditions in the spring.

"Much of southern, southeastern and east-central Alberta was affected by drought this year, to the extent that yields were sharply lower," he says.

"Therefore the crop residues remaining are also less than normal. The challenge of soil conservation in these areas, through June of 1990 is therefore as tough as ever. Farmers are encouraged more strongly than ever to avoid tillage as much as possible.

"Remember that with fields to be fallowed next year, the residue left now is all the protection the soil will have until mid-June 1990. Any summerfallow tillage operation which can be avoided or delayed by using inexpensive herbicide now will help maintain protection from erosion."

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Contact: Dan Cole 427-4438
John Timmermans 948-8539

For immediate release

"Hay Day" planned for Lac La Biche

Farmers looking to buy or sell hay can come to a common meeting ground near Lac La Biche next week, for the first "Hay Day" planned in the northwest agriculture district.

Unlike the annual hay auction planned for later in the month, the October 22 Hay Day will provide a low-key forum for buyers to negotiate whatever price they can with producers.

Harvey Yoder, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Lac La Biche says farmers will be able to examine samples of the hay being offered for sale and come to terms on a price with the seller without paying sales commission.

Feed analysis results will be available so farmers will know the quality of the products offered.

"We're interested in seeing if this type of hay sale is popular with farmers," says Yoder. "A good variety of hay and a good range of quality will be available, and we hope the format will be useful, yet less expensive for all parties concerned."

Sponsored jointly by the Lakeland Forage Association, Lac La Biche Agricultural Service Board and Alberta Agriculture, it is expected between 15,000 and 20,000 tonnes of hay will be up for sale during the afternoon.

Yoder says with most of the lots already consigned, there will be a good cross section of quality, ranging from high protein hay for dairy cattle, to good maintenance hay for beef cattle.

As well both large round bales and small square bales will be sold.

Along with the sale there will be a demonstration of hay processing equipment, including grinders and new equipment for unrolling large round bales.

As well there will be a demonstration of some hay preservatives used in the district.

(Cont'd)

Producers with high quality pony and milling oats to sell are encouraged to bring samples of their grains to Hay Day. Yoder says five grain buyers will be attending the event to evaluate and buy oats.

The DA says one-gallon oat samples are adequate for buyers to inspect.

Yoder says hay and oat buyers and sellers from outside the Lac La Biche district are welcome to participate in the day, which will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. at a site two miles west of Lac La Biche on Highway 55. The DA says the location will be well signed.

In a separate event, the annual Lakeland Forage Association's hay auction is planned for October 29 at the Bonnyville Auction Mart with about 3,200 tonnes of hay of varying quality to be sold to the highest bidders.

For more information contact Harvey Yoder in Lac La Biche at 623-5218.

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Contact: Harvey Yoder
623-5218

For immediate release

Seminar looks at beef quality issues

Meat packers, retailers, food service representatives, researchers and beef producers from across Canada will be in Edmonton later this month for a seminar devoted to producing quality beef.

The October 19 and 20 seminar which will feature speakers from all aspects of the meat industry will attempt to identify any shortcomings in beef production, processing and retailing and look at new trends and technology which affect quality.

Susan Kitchen of Calgary, an manager of Alberta Agriculture's redmeat development program, says the bottom line is to produce, process and market beef which meets the high quality standards set by consumers.

Kitchen says a recent study by the Beef Information Centre shows consumers want better quality beef products.

"Today's consumers are very quality conscious, yet recent research shows that many are dissatisfied with the quality of present day beef," she says.

"Everyone in the beef industry - producer, grader, meat scientist, processor, retailer, restauranteur - has a role to play in ensuring that their customer receives the best quality product possible.

"The 'Strategies for Success, Focus on Beef Quality' seminar will try to identify where the industry is headed in producing better quality beef."

The seminar will examine issues such as:

- assessment of quality from a consumer viewpoint
- the impact on Canadian beef of imported no-roll beef
- technology to better determine quality in the carcass
- effects of spray chilling, electrical stimulation and aging
- degree of fat necessary for palatability
- case-ready beef
- a food service perspective on beef quality

(Cont'd)

Carolyn McDonell of the Beef Information Centre will talk on "The Quality Challenge", while keynote speaker William Band of Coopers & Lybrand in Toronto will talk on "Winning Through Customer Satisfaction".

During a panel discussion led by Dennis Laycraft of the Alberta Cattle Commission, Dr. Russell Cross of Texas A & M University will talk about production influences on quality, Dr. Steve Morgan-Jones of Agriculture Canada in Lacombe will talk about meat handling technology and Dr. Howard Swatland of the University of Guelph will talk about grading technology.

In another session chaired by Alberta Agriculture trade director Dave Rous, several speakers from Canada Packers, Excel Corp., Provigo and research agencies will give the processor's, retailer's and restauranteur's perspective on the beef quality issue.

The seminar to be held at the Coast Terrace Inn in Edmonton is organized by the Beef Information Centre, Alberta Cattle Commission, Alberta Agriculture, Canada Meat Science Association and Canadian Meat Council.

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Contact: Susan Kitchen
297-8452

For immediate release

Weather didn't delay harvest in all parts of Alberta

While rains held up harvest in some regions of Alberta in September, farmers in other areas were able to continue field work, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Peter Dzikowski, weather resource specialist with the conservation and development branch in Edmonton, says while cool and wet sums up September weather in central Alberta, conditions were generally warmer and drier in southern and northwestern Alberta allowing harvesting operations to progress to near completion.

Dzikowski, in his monthly weather summary, notes Rocky Mountain House reported 100.4 millimetres (mm) of precipitation compared to a normal value of 49.7 mm for September, while Red Deer reported 80.3 mm compared to the 43.9 mm long-term average.

While most locations in central Alberta had 40 to 60 mm of precipitation, which is about 50 per cent above average, Vegreville reported only 11.9 mm, about one-quarter of the 41.9 mm long-term average.

"The ample precipitation and cool temperatures caused harvesting delays," he says. "But the precipitation helped replenish soil moisture levels for the 1989 cropping season."

The specialist says by contrast most locations in southern Alberta and in the Peace River Region reported precipitation amounts of 15 to 25 mm, which is about one-half of the long term average for September.

The generally drier weather allowed good harvesting progress in these areas. However, Dzikowski says soil moisture reserves and water supplies have not been improved, especially in southern Alberta.

"Average temperatures for September were slightly above normal, in spite of what seemed to be a lot of cool weather," he says. "The few days of very hot weather early in the month brought the average temperature up to near or above normal for September."

For more information please contact Peter Dzikowski, weather resource specialist in Edmonton at 422-4385.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

AGRI-NEWS

NOV 16 1988

October 17, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

For immediate release

Low lamb prices trigger tripartite payout

About 200 Alberta sheep producers will be entitled to share some $50,000 in benefits in the first ever payout made under the National Tripartite Stabilization Plan for lambs.

In a recent announcement by the National Lamb Committee, it was agreed producers participating in the plan will receive $6.83 per lamb sold during June, July and August. This payment is required to bring gross returns up to 95 per cent of the last 10 year average price in each region of Canada adjusted for inflation.

Herb Lock, administrator of the Red Meat Stabilization program in Alberta, explains that the support price is based on 95 per cent of the indexed moving average price for lambs sold in the same quarter for each of the preceding 10 years adjusted to account for inflation.

This adjustment factor is calculated from an index of feed grain prices combined with an index of the general rate of inflation in the economy and is designed to simulate changes in the actual cost of production.

He says while the market price received in Alberta for the comparable period one year ago of $85.83 did not trigger a payout, average Alberta sale prices declined 20 per cent for June, July and August 1988 to $67.70 per 100 pounds.

Prices also declined in the rest of Canada resulting in a payout of $6.83 per lamb. This payout when added to the $67.70 per 100 pounds average Alberta-price brings total average returns in Alberta to $74.53 during the June to August period.

The agreement for the National Tripartite Stabilization Plan for lambs was signed in early 1986 by Canada and the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and P.E.I.

"The major objective is to stabilize the receipts of participating producers through stabilization payments from a fund created equally by producer and federal and provincial government contributions," says Lock.

"Payments are made from the fund when the average market price for lambs falls below a calculated support price."

(Cont'd)

Market analysts say a decline in Canadian lamb prices particularly in Western Canada was caused by a number of factors including oversupply and reduced consumer demand.

"Unrealistically low grain prices over the last winter combined with two successive years of excellent slaughter lamb prices contributed to a 10 per cent increase in lamb production in both Canada and the U.S. and inevitably to the 'Great Price Slide of 88'," says Lock.

Modifications to the existing plan to simplify reporting procedures are in progress with details to be released in November.

Participating producers that filed sales reports by September 30 should receive cheques in early November.

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Contact: Herb Lock
422-9167

For immediate release

Up-to-date ventilation technology described in publications

Alberta Agriculture has put together an updated package of information leaflets on the latest farm building ventilation technology.

The new leaflets from the Canada Plan Service are part of the recently released 1988 building plan index available from the department's district extension offices in Alberta.

Dennis Darby, of Lethbridge, farm structures engineer in charge of the plan service in Alberta, says although some of these new leaflets were completed this summer the announcement was delayed until the full package was available.

"Now is the time when producers are checking and tuning up ventilation controls," he says. "Some are thinking of revamping old ventilation systems that may not work as well as newer ones in cold weather."

The specialist says there have been two major improvements in ventilation technology, - recirculation duct systems and self-adjusting balanced-baffle air inlets.

He says both systems have done a lot to overcome chronic cold weather ventilation problems in confinement housing. New leaflets 9710 and 9715 cover these topics.

"The challenge of adapting new systems, or deciding on what to revise or correct in a building depends on a good understanding of the principles," he says. "Two of the new bulletins, 'Troubleshooting Ventilation Problems', and 'Fan Ventilation Principles' provide timely knowledge for aiding these decisions."

Darby says Alberta Agriculture regional engineers are available to assist with ventilation designs and to assess ventilation problems and corrective action.

"Often the problem is one of understanding how the system is designed to work, and making the necessary adjustments, rather than a costly wholesale renovation," says the engineer.

(Cont'd)

Up-to-date ventilation technology described in publications (cont'd)

Ventilation leaflets from the plan service include:

9700 Fan Ventilation Principles and Rates
9701 Interlocked Heating/Ventilation Systems Controls
9702 Troubleshooting Livestock and Poultry Ventilation Problems
9703 Ventilation Instruments
9705 Selecting Fans For Livestock Buildings
9710 Fresh Air Inlets
9715 Self-Adjusting Balanced Baffle Slot Air Inlets
9750 Ventilating Small Livestock Rooms

For more information contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or regional engineering office.

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Contact: Regional Engineer (your locale)
Lethbridge - 381-5113
Airdrie - 948-8524
Red Deer - 340-5322
Vermilion - 853-8109
Barrhead - 674-8253
Fairview - 835-2291

For immediate release

Water erosion is an "insidious" problem

Water erosion is a silent, often unseen menace to agriculture, which has potential to affect nearly every quarter section of cropland in the province, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

It's a problem that doesn't have the high visibility wind erosion dust storms, which carry away hundreds of tonnes of soil at a time. But, Douwe Vanderwel, a water engineer with the department in Edmonton, says water erosion is just as serious a threat to the soil resource.

He describes it as an insidious problem which can begin with something as simple as a plough furrow placed too close to a draw or other natural water course, or it can be as complex as generations of poor cropping and tillage practices.

But whatever the cause, he says the end result is the same - another season goes by and more soil is lost and valuable agricultural land either has lost or reduced production capabilities.

Working with Alberta Agriculture programs such as SCAP, the Soil Conservation Area Program, 30 to 40 erosion problems are tackled each year. But the specialist, who is also acting section head of the conservation and development branch, says while SCAP repairs some of the damage it isn't able to address the bigger problem.

"Overall changes in farming practices in the last 30 years have led the agriculture industry into a vicious circle of water erosion which now demands new land management techniques and in some cases more money than is currently available to correct," says Vanderwel.

"It's not simply a matter of a single farmer going out and accidentally creating a situation that allows soil to erode. It involves the overall attitude toward farming. Erosion is a symptom of the land use changes that have been made since farming started on the prairies.

"There has been a push for more efficient and greater production. More lands have been drained, more protective cover has been removed and the problem has accelerated."

(Cont'd)

A dramatic before and after comparison. The top photo shows the degree of erosion which can occur when a natural waterway in a field is left exposed to rain and snowmelt. The bottom photo shows the area after it was re-landscaped and seeded to a grass mixture. Although the surrounding stubble will be cultivated the waterway will kept in grass.

(Cont'd)

He says erosion is a concern that goes beyond the farm gate. It becomes an issue for society as the natural resource - soil - is degraded and lost.

Vanderwel says one solution lies in promoting conservation farming techniques. While it is often expensive to correct a problem once it is created, he says preventing the problem requires an awareness of what practices contribute to erosion and use of new farming techniques.

In some instances erosion results when land is farmed that should never have been broken because of the soil type or topography. But in most cases normal agricultural production can continue without comprising soil conservation.

"Concern over soil erosion depends on the degree of visibility," he says. "Sometimes the problem is so familiar to the farmer that it isn't really recognized as soil erosion.

"A shallow draw or a low spot in a grain field that washes out every year can be hidden or filled in by cultivation. The problem seems to disappear, but in reality everytime that area washes out soil is lost and it takes many years to replace it.

"Sometimes the erosion problem is on none-cropland that doesn't affect crop production or other aspects of the farming operation. It may be regarded as a draw or a ditch that always washes out each year - a natural occurrence.

"The problem may not become a real concern until it grows to such proportion that it creates problems for some other farming activity or affects the public by eroding a ditch or a roadway."

Vanderwel says a continued effort is needed to repair the damage that has already been created, and education is required to prevent new problems from starting.

"On-farm water erosion problems can range from the small draw in a field that washes out every year, to, and we have some examples of this in the province, erosion which creates a gorge 25 feet deep and three miles long."

The specialist says preventing the problems involves assessing the land to first of all determine if the topography is suitable for agriculture.

(Cont'd)

If it is suitable, it should be farmed with minimum cultivation to reduce the risk of water runoff. Natural draws in the field or water runways should be maintained as grassed waterways which can carry water without eroding the soil. And adequate crop residue or trash should be left on the field to protect the soil.

Vanderwel says once soil is eroded by either wind or water it's productive ability is changed.He says erosion separates the soil spreading the fine particles over a wide area and leaving the courser material behind.

"Good productive soils have a mixture of silts, sand and clays," he says. "Once that combination is lost or reorganized the production capability of a soil is lost. Even a small degree of erosion can affect soil quality and it can take generations of good land management to restore."

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Contact: Douwe Vanderwel
422-4385

For immediate release

Grassed waterways can keep soil in place

Those shallow draws or swales that snake across many grain fields should be maintained as grassed waterways to prevent soil erosion says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Grassed waterways aren't the only measures farmers can use to prevent soil from being eroded by water, but they are one of the easiest and most effective, says Douwe Vanderwel, a water engineer with the conservation and development branch in Edmonton.

The specialist says rain or annual runoff is naturally going to follow these water runs across a field. If there is no cover such as grass or stubble the soil will be eroded.

Although cultivation, in less severe cases, can often cover the erosion scar, Vanderwel says the damage has already been done and the situation will probably be repeated the next time it rains.

By properly landscaping and seeding the wateruns with sod-forming grass, water can still follow its natural course but the soil will be protected.

Once the water runs are established any field cultivation should be done around the grassed areas. However, most harvesting machinery will be able to travel over the strips without problems.

The engineer says farmers can usually establish their own small grassed waterways, but in cases where larger areas are being developed, or where erosion has already been a serious problem they should seek professional advice from Alberta Agriculture or their local agricultural service board.

"In designing a grass waterway you have to make sure the work you do in one area isn't going to transfer the problem to another area," says Vanderwel.

"Careful consideration must also be given to ensure that correct slopes and shapes are being used for the waterway to avoid any sudden drops that would permit the start of erosion again."

(Cont'd)

Runoff from heavy rains worked like a swather to cut a path through this grain field shortly after it was seeded this year. The unprotected waterrun was badly eroded inspite of the fact that the land was made up primarily of solonetzic or hardpan soils. A sod-forming grassed waterway would prevent this erosion problem.

The specialist says once a waterway is established several factors should be watched to ensure it is maintained in good condition.

1. Keep a close watch on your waterway especially after spring runoff or heavy rains. Damage noticed early can be repaired and re-seeded before it becomes a major problem.

2. Before the beginning of spring snowmelt, use your tractor to create a path through snow in the watercourse. This prevents the misdirection of spring runoff water because of a plugged waterway, on to the adjacent cultivated fields where it would cause erosion.

3. Control gophers and other burrowing animals that live in the waterway. Their activities create weak spots that can start new erosion problems.

4. Keep cattle off the grassed waterway. Their hooves can puncture the sod cover giving erosion a place to start.

5. Repair and re-seed any bare or eroded spots as soon as possible.

(Cont'd)

6. Grass should be trimmed to prevent the waterway from choking up and to promote a good strong sod. Cutting for hay is an added bonus.

7. Control the weeds in your waterway, especially the perennial broadleaf weeds, to prevent them from spreading downstream or onto surrounding fields.

8. Apply nitrogen fertilizer to obtain the best growth of grass possible.

9. Careful cultivation must be carried out adjacent to the waterway to ensure proper drainage of local runoff into the waterway and not alongside of it. This should include a final lengthwise pass with a cultivator and harrow along both sides of the waterway to eliminate dead furrows and soil mounds.

10. Keep a wide (three metre) uncultivated strip of grass on both sides of the waterway for stability.

11. Do not use your waterway as a road. Tire ruts damage the grass sod and give erosion a place to start.

12. Do not use your grass waterway for dumping rocks, dead trees or old cars. Flowing water will swirl around these irregular objects increasing the water's ability to erode.

Vanderwel says a properly designed waterway that is well maintained should serve to protect the soil from water erosion for many years.

For technical assistance and consultation on designing a grassed water contact county or municipal district agricultural fieldmen, Alberta Agriculture district or regional offices or the conservation and development branch in Edmonton at 422-4385.

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Contact: Douwe Vanderwel
422-4385

October 17, 1988
For immediate release

New technology used to control erosion

Solving chronic water erosion problems that threaten to destroy cropland requires site specific prescriptions and sometimes testing of new technology, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Douwe Vanderwel, water engineer and acting section head of the conservation and development branch, says two recent erosion control projects in the County of Lamont have solved two long-running problems while providing the department and county staff with valuable experience.

PARANICH AND VANDERWEL

Funded jointly by SCAP - Soil Conservation Area Program - and the county, the projects were on the Metro Kolotylo farm in the north-east corner of Lamont county.

Working with Greg Paranich, the county Agricultural Service Board fieldman, Alberta Agriculture provided financial and technical assistance to develop, design and install the projects.

Now, one-full year since the erosion control measures were installed, all three partners say the work acheived success.

"These two projects weren't considered as routine erosion control projects," says Vanderwel. "Much of the work in preventing soil erosion on cropland involves designing grassed waterways and recommending other conservation farming techniques. But in these instances those measures wouldn't work."

(Cont'd)

In both cases water from rain, snowmelt or underground springs had eroded large gullies. Previous attempts over the years to control the erosion had failed.

One gully, created by water that drained from a quarter section of land just above the North Saskatchewan River valley, was actively cutting its way back into productive farm land.

The second gully, which formed in a natural draw between two grain fields, was getting deeper each year and threatening to erode the bed of a boundary road between Two Hills and Lamont counties.

"In both cases we needed a means to slow the flow of water and stabilize the soil," said Panarich. "With each heavy rain or with runoff each spring more soil was being lost and the gullies were getting deeper and wider. Over the years people had tried throwing rocks and other heavy debris in the gullies to stop the erosion but it seemed to only make the problem worse."

Vanderwel said two different systems were designed to deal with the problems.

"It required a lot of headscratching and discussion to figure out what would work," he says. "In Alberta we actually haven't had that much experience with these type of structural developments. And we didn't want to put in a system which would create more problems for the farmer."

On the quarter section above the North Saskatchewan River, the land sloped so that all drainage water ran into one corner before breaking over the bank into a ravine. Each year the eroded edge of that ravine was creeping further into the grain field.

The final solution was to build a berm along the two edges of the field in the low corner to create a basin which prevented the water from rushing over the edge.

In the centre of the basin a drainage pipe was installed which would carry the water down the ravine about 100 metres to a discharge area where the ground was stable.

"In many ways it works just like a bathtub," says Paranich. "The water runs down to one corner and drains away to stable ground where erosion isn't a problem."

(Cont'd)

Top photo shows the degree of erosion in a ravine between two grain fields in the county of Lamont. Bottom photo shows the same site one year later, after the area was re-landscaped, covered by a special matting which helps hold the soil and then seeded with a grass seed mixture.

(Cont'd)

The drain pipe, which stands about two feet out of the ground is designed to carry the water away slowly. Reports this year indicate although about 18 inches of water collected in the corner after a heavy rain, it took about two days for the water to disappear.

Paranich says the slow drainage is the key to making the project successful. He said if the water simply flushed down the pipe it would probably only transfer the erosion problem to another part of the farm.

Except for a small enclosure protecting the drainpipe, the farmer is able to crop the same amount of farmland.

In the second case a natural ravine between two fields was being eroded. Development of more nearby farmland over the years and upgrading of a county road at the head end of the ravine had increased the flow of discharge water into the gully. As well a small underground spring was contributing to the problem.

In this case Vanderwel decided to use a carpet of nylon mesh to hold the unstable soil in place.

First a tile drainage pipe was buried to carry water from the underground spring through the unstable soil to stable ground further down the ravine.

The area was landscaped to fill the erosion cut and to help direct a gentle flow of surface water down the ravine. The nylon mesh, known as Enkamat, was laid over the unstable site and covered with top soil. The area was then seeded with a grass mixture. The grass roots, entwined in the nylon mesh, are holding the soil in place. The specialist says this work has solved the erosion problem.

Referring to construction planning, he says timing is important.

"Usually you can't carry out construction during the cropping season and unfortunately the best time from the farmer's point of view is after harvest," he says. "Ideally you want to do the work when the ground is most stable and yet allow enough time for the grasses to become established before the next heavy rainfall period or snowmelt."

(Cont'd)

Vanderwel says although both Lamont projects may be expensive from a farmer's point of view - in terms of what the farmer perceives his benefit to be - they are "extremely" inexpensive from an engineering standpoint. The projects provide experience that can be used on other sites and other solutions can cost considerably more.

More information on SCAP can be obtained through local Agricultural Service Board offices. Technical assistance and consultation on erosion control projects is available from Alberta Agriculture's district and regional offices and the conservation and development branch in Edmonton.

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Contact: Douwe Vanderwel 422-4385
Greg Paranich 859-2233

For immediate release

Home study course explains farm profit

Making a profit at farming means more than just having money in the bank at the end of the year, and a new Alberta Agriculture home study course has been designed to put the term in perspective.

"Understanding Profit, the Business of Farming" has just been released by the department to help farm managers look at their operations and determine where profit and loss fit into the picture.

Pat Davidson, homestudy co-ordinator, says Understanding Profit is a new concept in homestudy material produced by the department.

"It's much more than a reference book," she says. "It's been designed as a workbook. There are five chapters farmers can work through in progression which explain the various components which contribute to profit or loss.

"Each chapter follows the same pattern. The chapter concept is explained, an example is described and an exercise is provided to help measure your understanding. The answers for each exercise are provided."

The home study package wraps up with a summary chapter which reviews the material.

Garry Bradshaw, of the department's farm business management branch in Olds describes profit as the "engine that runs the whole farm machine".

"Often farm managers place a lot of emphasis on cash flow, but it is important to look at the whole profit picture and help people understand what profit is," says Bradshaw.

"For long-term survival, farm operations must be profitable, but what does that mean?"

He says a farmer may end the year with very little cash in the bank, but with grain bins full of wheat or an additional 30 cows in his herd. On the other hand a farmer may end the year with $30,000 in the bank but still have a stack of bills to pay.

(Cont'd)

"The guy with little or no cash, but with an inventory on hand may end the year with a profit, whereas the guy with cash in the bank and bills to pay may be in a loss situation."

The supervisor of the branch's financial management section says the homestudy course explains the five components which contribute to profit and loss - revenue and expenses; product and supply inventory; fixed assets and depreciation; liabilities and interest; and payables and receivables.

The course was written by Karin Holst, the department's family resource management specialist in Fairview and Doug Barlund, farm management economist in Olds.

The $35 course which comes packaged in a three-ring binder is available by writing and making cheques payable to:

REDA
(Rural Education and Development Association)
14815 - 119 Avenue,
Edmonton, Alberta,
T5L 2N9

Application forms are also available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

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Contact: Pat Davidson 427-2402
Garry Bradshaw 556-4244

For immediate release

Researcher says lime will control algae in dugouts

Alberta farmers dealing with algae buildup in dugouts and small ponds should have a service available to them by next summer, which will solve the problem, says a University of Alberta researcher.

Jit Lim, a masters student in the department of zoology, says he has developed a system using lime that removes algae and keeps it under control.

Lim, who has been working on the project for the last two years, says the procedure is still experimental and more data needs to be collected before the service can be established.

But trial projects conducted to date on dugouts in the Peace River, Westlock, Barrhead and New Serpeta districts show effective control is obtained with an economic application of lime.

In the study funded by the University of Alberta, Alberta Agriculture, Alberta Fish and Wildlife Branch and the federal government, Lim says the treatment method can be used in dugouts across the province.

"Anywhere where you have the combination of small bodies of shallow water, that are heated by the sun and fed by nutrients, you have a virtual garden for algae growth," he says.

Along with just being a nuisance, algae, which develops in dugouts and lakes, can be a threat to human and livestock health. Blue-green algae in particular can produce a toxin when it blooms that can be fatal if ingested in contaminated water.

The researcher who specializes in the study of lakes and streams developed the lime treatment method while working on a bigger project.

"Initially I was interested in controlling algae build-up on larger bodies of water such as lakes," he says. "So to find an environment similar to a lake which was economic in size to work with we looked at dugouts. As our work progressed we realized that algae control in dugouts is a major concern to the agriculture industry so we tailored this part of the project to provide benefits directly to farmers."

(Cont'd)

Although there is complex water chemistry involved, in simple terms the researcher found applying a slurry of hydrated lime - the same type of lime used to make whitewash for barns - to a dugout, quickly eliminates the algae problem with no adverse side affects.

Lim says the lime works in two ways. First it attachs itself to the algae floating in the dugout and draws it to the bottom. Secondly, the lime ties up nutrients in the water such phosphorous, effectively starving the algae and preventing it form growing again.

He says the first dugouts treated more than a year ago are still algae-free although he expects a lighter follow-up treatment will be needed every one or two years.

Lim says the lime appears to have no adverse affect on plant or animal life in and around the dugout. After the initial treatment he says the water is suitable for drinking within seven to 10 days.

Until now the only other popular means of controlling lime involved spreading bluestone on the dugout. Bluestone will poison the algae but it doesn't kill the nutrients which support its growth.

Lim says controlling algae with lime involves more than randomly applying the mineral.

He says a pre-treatment analysis is required to determine the chemistry of the water and the severity of the problem. As well the land or conditions around the dugout also have to be inspected to eliminate the flow of nutrients into the small water storage area.

"Each dugout is different so there is no set formula for how much lime to apply," says Lim. "As well if you are able to eliminate or reduce the source of nutrients that feed the algae the success of control measures will be improved."

Along with the dugout projects, Lim has also conducted some algae control projects on Figure Eight Lake in northern Alberta.

His study has been headquartered at U of A's Meanook Biological Research Station near Athabasca.

For more information on algae control in dugouts contact Jit Lim, University of Alberta, Department of Zoology, Biological Science Building, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2E9, or call 432-5497.

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Contact: Jit Lim
432-5497

Agri-News Briefs

SOUTHERN ALBERTA AG SOCIETIES PLAN MINI CONFERENCE

Members of southern Alberta agricultural societies are invited to a conference in Lethbridge in late November designed to help in planning day-to-day activities as well as provide a forecast for the future. The second annual "Agricultural Societies Are..." conference will be held at the Lethbridge Regional Exhibition Association grounds November 25 and 26. November 15 is registration deadline. Dr. Fenton McHardy, former dean of agriculture at the University of Alberta will be the keynote speaker to open the conference. He will talk on "Agriculture - Today, and Beyond Tomorrow". On the program November 26 will be talks on Western Canada Lottery, a talk on the history and future of the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies, a session on conducting effective meetings and advice on lobbying. For more information or registration forms contact Rae Hunter, Program Consultant, Alberta Agriculture, 201 J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or phone 427-2171.

NEW PUBLICATIONS LIST

The latest edition of Alberta Agriculture's directory of publications has just been released by the department. The 1988 - 89 Publications List, provides an index of the more than 1,100 fact sheets, booklets, pamphlets and manuals produced on virtually every area of crop and livestock production, agricultural engineering, farm economics and home economics. All publications listed in the directory are available free of charge either from Alberta Agriculture district and regional offices or from headquarters in Edmonton. For a copy of the new Publications List, write the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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AGRI-NEWS

NOV 10 1988

October 24, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

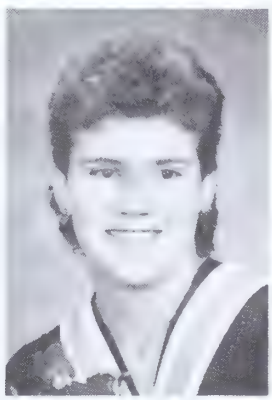
October 24, 1988
For immediate release

1988 Recipients of the
"Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother" Scholarship

Three agriculture students have been named recipients of this year's "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother" Scholarship, for $1500 each.

Marcia Breitkreuz, 20; Valerie Differenz, 18; and Gail Cunningham, 18, receive the award in recognition of their academic achievement, leadership abilities, and contribution to the community.

M. BREITKREUZ



V. DIFFERENZ

G. CUNNINGHAM

Breitkreuz who is in her fourth year of a Faculty of Agriculture program at the Univeristy of Guelph, previously attended the University of Alberta in Edmonton where her leadership abilities shone in the Agriculture Club as Vice-President, Academic.

She was also a volunteer at the Lynnwood Extended Care Centre, through Ceres Fraternity and the 4-H Alumni. Breitkreuz is from Onoway, Alberta.

Differenz, a second year Agriculture student at the University of Alberta, is working towards becoming a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

Raised on a farm in Bruderheim, Alberta, she has an interest in horses that has kept her involved in 4-H, Edmonton Northlands, and fund raising for the Canadian Cancer Society Ride for Cancer.

(Cont'd)

Differenz has displayed leadership skills as a camp counsellor, a teacher's aid and booster and co-organizer of Peer Support.

Cunningham, a former 4-H Premier's Award Winner (1987), is in her first year of bachelor of science program in agiculture at the University of Alberta.

From Kelsey, Alberta, she has always been actively involved in school activities, church youth groups and 4-H. Her outstanding leadership abilities are known to motivate those around her to strive for their potential. Cunningham has won several awards in the past for academic standing, athletics and citizenship.

This scholarship, sponsored by the Alberta government, was presented as a gift to the Queen Mother when she was in Alberta attending the World Angus Forum in July, 1985. The scholarship recognizes and assists deserving young Albertans in their first, second, third or fourth year of study, in the fields of agriculture, homes economics, veterinary science (large animal) or agricultural engineering.

The "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother" Scholarship is sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, administered by the 4-H branch of Alberta Agriculture and given out in the name of Her Majesty the Queen Mother.

- 30 -

Contact: Anita Styba, 4-H Personal Development Specialist
4-H Branch
200, 7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6
(403) 422-4H4H

For immediate release

More than $35,000 in 4-H scholarships awarded

A record 58 past and present Alberta 4-H members have been selected to share more than $35,000 in scholarships awarded for 1988-89.

The winners were chosen from more than 200 applications judged on the basis of 4-H participation and leadership; contribution to the community; school activities; and academic standing.

The Alberta 4-H scholarships are sponsored by corporations, individuals, the Alberta government and memorial funds. In 1988, four new sponsors were added. Along with Alberta Treasury Branches which are sponsoring seven scholarships - one per each 4-H region, other new scholarships are Bale Bandits, the Stanley Shulhan Memorial Scholarship, and the Woodgrove Unifarm Local Scholarship.

Established sponsors increasing the number of scholarships awarded included the Farm Credit Corporation and Petro-Canada. The Norma Jean Gray Scholarship increased from two awards last year, to six in 1988.

For more information on the 4-H Scholarship Program in Alberta - or for information on starting a 4-H Scholarship, contact Alberta Agriculture, 4-H Branch, Room 200, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or phone (403) 422-4H4H.

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Contact: Anita Styba
4-H Personal Development Specialist
422-4444

(Editor's Note - following is a complete list of 4-H scholarship winners for 1988-89.)

1988 4-H SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

SCHOLARSHIP		RECIPIENT	
Alberta Dairymen's Association & Alberta Agriculture	$3000	Maxine Cameron	Crossfield
Alberta Treasury Branches	$1000 each	Raymond Hopkins	Huxley
		Twyla Job	Hanna
		Jason Verhaest	Seven Persons
		Pauline Lipkewich	Lamont
		Lori Shopland	Athabasca
		Michelle Lemay	Grande Prairie
		Lori Maki	Eckville
Alberta Wheat Pool (1st Year)	$ 300	Kathryn Mitchell	Pincher Creek
		Margrit Lehmann	Cecil Lake
(2nd Year)		Angel Roberts	Barrhead
		Tamara Kapicki	Gibbons
Canadian National Exhibition	$1000	Grant Clark	Erskine
Central Alberta Dairy Pool	$ 500 each	Beverly Condon	Bashaw
		Patrick McAllister	Olds
Ceres International Women's Fraternity	$ 100	Laura-Lee Mappin	Byemoor
Edith Taylor Memorial	$ 400	Darlene Malcolm	Hines Creek
Farm Credit Corporation	$ 200 each	Tracy McLeod	Bowden
		Kimberly Brennan	Forestburg
		Carolyn Machacek	Taber
		Laura Meynberg	Marwayne
		Debbie Kaup	Riviere Qui Barre
		Cheryl Martin	Blueberry Mountain
		Stacey Johnson	Rimbey
Farmhouse International Fraternity	$ 100	Brad Mappin	Byemoor
4-H Foundation of Alberta	$ 400	David Peltzer	Duchess
Hoechst Canada Bursary	$ 500	Darcy Nott	Innisfree
Inga Marr Memorial	$ 300	Teresa Burlet	Cherhill
Lethbridge & District 4-H Committee	$ 250	Carrie Gergely	Coaldale
Lilydale Co-operative	$ 800	Tracy Hueppelsheuser	Blackfalds

(Cont'd)

Norma Jean Gray	$ 750 each	Kari Griffith	Balzac
		Julie Swanson	Milk River
		Lisa Turgeon	Lac La Biche
		Lori Brown	Tofield
		Lori Anderson	Bowden
		Lisa Fedirchuk	Eckville
Pennington Memorial	$ 889.87 each	Lisa Properzi	Westlock
		Karrie Werenka	Sangudo
Petro-Canada 4-H Youth Leadership Award	$1000 each	Joyce Winter	Ponoka
		Lisa Shuttleworth	Rolling Hills
		Neil Stringer	Sunnybrook
		Theresa Doupe	Oyen
Stanley Shulhan Memorial	$ 200	Rhondalyn Wood	Gunn
Thomas Caryk Memorial	$ 500	Kevin Land	Manning
TX Bar (1)	$1000	Shane Bateman	Calgary
TX Bar (2)	$ 500	Justin Murray	Mountain View
TX Bar (3)	$ 400	Lisa McKinley	Medicine Hat
United Grain Growers	$ 500	Lawrence Love	Sexsmith
Wheat Board Surplus Monies Trust	$ 600 each	Kari-Lynn Larsen	Calgary
		Sherry Roth	Heisler
		Lori Simon	Bow Island
		Penny MacGillivray	Iron River
		Tracy Pfannmuller	Mayerthorpe
		Karen Hogg	Wembly
		Lorraine Cox	Camrose
Woodgrove Unifarm Local	$ 300	Annette Boelman	Westlock
World of Beef & Feedlot Management	$ 500	Randy Stretch	Ponoka

- 30 -

For immediate release

Slough consolidation keeps water at home

Farmers across Alberta are experimenting with a new concept in on-farm water management that takes nuisance water in fields and turns it into a valuable on-farm resource, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Neil MacAlpine, says the technique known as slough consolidation involves taking pockets of water which collect in field depressions and waterlog the soil, drown crops and create obstacles for farm equipment, and "consolidating" them into one storage area on the farm.

He says the low areas can be drained to create one larger slough, dugouts or farm ponds, making use of the stored water.

"Consolidation is a particularly attractive option for farmers who do not have an outlet or who have neighbors downstream that are against more water being drained onto their land," says MacAlpine, an on-farm water management specialist with the department in Edmonton.

"However, consolidation schemes work best with farmers who are intensifying their operations and recognize that a large, secure source of water is essential to their production.

"It also works well with farmers who want to protect the wildlife and waterfowl on their farm even as they struggle with the need for greater field efficiency."

He says slough consolidation is the ultimate water management system for prairie farmers who have to protect themselves from both flood and drought.

In a water-short region with the legacy of two major droughts in the last 10 years, he says it is a more desirable option than draining water off farms.

"And the extra funding from Alberta Agriculture's Water Supplies Assistance Program combined with PRFA's dugout cost-sharing make large reservoirs more affordable this year."

Cont'd

MacAlpine notes however, slough consolidation is not for every farmer nor will it fit cost effectively on every parcel of land. He says because of the volume of water that can be involved, the key is finding a good location for a low-cost storage reservoir.

He says farmers must recognize puddles of water in a waterlogged depression at seeding time were a much larger pond at snowmelt.

As an example the specialist says in central Alberta, snowmelt on a quarter section can produce 15 to 20 acre-feet of runoff. A farmer would need a reservoir 10 times a normal size dugout to store all this water.

Normally up to 60 per cent of the snowmelt will infiltrate as the soils, under water, thaw in the depression. MacAlpine says to reduce the volume of drained water to be stored in the reservoir, the drainage system needs a control structure that will mimic the retention and infiltration that naturally occurs in depressions and potholes.

"With a controlled drainage system, the residual water that does not infiltrate is in the order of six to eight acre-feet from a quarter section's runoff," he says. "The storage reservoir now only has to be four to five times larger than a normal size dugout."

Slough consolidation systems have a variety of options. The drainage system can be as simple as field ditches with back-flood gates or as automated as pumped subsurface (tile) drained systems with automatic controls. The reservoirs range from large sloughs, to livestock dugouts, diked lagoons to waterfowl ponds.

Another key point to slough consolidation is to get the bulk of the reservoir emptied by fall. That makes storage space available for next spring's runoff.

"The imaginative farmer turns this necessity into a benefit for his farm," he says. "Now that he has collected this nuisance water to a convenient location on the farm, he integrates the water into his production plans."

Cont'd

"We have farmers, as they consider intensive rotational grazing, who find slough consolidation volumes match the water demands of more cattle. There are farmers who have created small-scale waterfowl sanctuaries in a corner of the field around a consolidation slough. There are also small-scale irrigation projects supplied from a slough consolidation reservoir."

MacAlpine says the options are limited only by the imagination. Ideas can range from fish ponds, farmstead irrigation and recreation, to simply backup for domestic dugouts.

"Slough consolidation is not as simple or as cheap as off-farm drainage projects," he says. "However, consolidation does have intangible benefits such as security of water supply, better relations with the neighbors and a resource that is now in the right place ready for use at the right time."

The specialist says consulting engineers and wildlife biologists in Alberta are leading the way in North America in developing ideas for water storage systems and uses. He says the most expensive part of a project can be building a large consolidation reservoir.

MacAlpine notes some financial help is available through government programs. This year a maximum of $3,300 is available for dugout construction when the Alberta Water Supplies Assistance Program rebate is combined with PFRA's dugout rebate.

For technical advice on slough consolidation projects or information about cost-sharing programs, contact any Alberta Agriculture district office, or PFRA office.

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Contact: Neil MacAlpine
422-4385

For immediate release

Producers can't afford not to preg test

Although it's not a new theme, an Alberta Agriculture specialist says cattlemen can save both time and money by pregnancy testing their herds each fall.

Dr. Laura Rutter says unfortunately only about 30 per cent of Alberta cow-calf producers have their herds checked on a routine basis. She says while it does require some extra management to have the animals tested, it is well worth the effort.

The reproductive physiologist says the money saved in winter-feeding costs by shipping an open cow now, will often pay for the pregnancy testing of an entire herd.

She says she has yet to hear a good reason for not having animals checked.

"For at least the last 30 years, extension personnel, researchers, veterinarians and industry reps have hammered at producers explaining the benefits of preg-testing," says Rutter.

"So why aren't more producers doing it? We don't know the answer, although the three most common excuses are 'The test is not accurate. Preg-checking is too expensive. Preg-checking is not convenient.' And it's easy to shoot holes in any one of those claims."

The specialists says August and September are probably the best months in which to have pregnancy testing done. Markets for open cows shipped at this time are usually higher than later in the year.

But preg-testing in October and November can still be useful. The open animals can still be shipped to save on feeding costs, or they can at least be placed on maintenance for the winter which is also usually less expensive than the rations fed to the pregnant females.

The specialist says as far as test accuracy is concerned, usually the veterinarian is unfairly blamed. Poor test results can be due to several factors, with the main one being poor timing.

(Cont'd)

"Producers must realize that in order to gain the advantage of preg-checking, it must be at the right time," says Rutter. "Very experienced palpators can usually detect a pregnancy 30 days after breeding. But, the cow isn't 'safe in calf' until after 45 days from the last breeding.

"Under normal conditions, up to 15 per cent of cows will lose a fetus between 30 and 45 days after breeding. So, out of 10 cows palpated pregnant at 30 days, one or two of them could be open at 45 days. Producers can not blame the veterinarian for missed pregnancy or openness calls when the bull was pulled out the morning the vet came to do the preg-checking."

The specialist says another two to three per cent of cows will abort for natural causes between 45 and 250 days of pregnancy. These spontaneous abortions which are said to be nature's way of getting rid of genetic abnormalities, cannot be blamed on the cow, the farmer or the veterinarian.

She says if producers want an estimate of the stage of pregnancy the test should be made between 45 and 90 days from the last breeding. As well she says it is not unusual for some cows to show standing heat behavior even though they are pregnant.

As far as costs are concerned, the specialist estimates overwinter feeding costs at between $150 and $200 per cow. While a pregnant cow will produce a salable calf the next fall, she says an open cow kept over winter will simply get fat.

Rutter says with it costing between $1 and $3 per head to have cows preg-tested, money saved by culling open animals will easily cover the preg-check bill.

She says while actually performing the test will require some management changes it is a good habit to get into. She says the procedure only takes about two minutes per cow and can be combined with other fall cow management practices such as condition scoring, parasite control and vaccination programs.

(Cont'd)

She says good working facilities should include a crowding pen, an alley to the chute and a solid chute. A palpation gate also makes life easier. It allows the vet access to the rear of the cow without climbing in and out of the alley for every cow and it also blocks in-coming cows so the palpator doesn't have to always look over his or her shoulder.

Rutter says not to expect a vet to palpate a group of range cows that have been roped and tied to the side of a barn, fence or tree.

"Getting cows preg-checked now would avoid a surprise at calving time and would give a producer enough time to make management changes if necessary, to avoid a repeat surprise at next year's production cycle," she says.

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Contact: Dr. Laura Rutter
427-5308

For immediate release

Top 4-H livestock judge offered Denver trip

The top 4-H livestock judge in Alberta will be able to add one more trip to his or her credit this year with the announcement of a new prize for the winner of the provincial competition.

Along with a trip to Agribition in Regina, the winner of the Alberta Multi-Species Judging Award will also be hosted for three days at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Colorado.

Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H agriculture specialist, says the sponsors for the U.S. trip will include the Alberta Canada All Breeds Association (ACABA), the National Western Stock Show and the Future Farmers of America.

This is only the second year for the Alberta Multi-Species Judging Competition. To be held during the Edmonton Northlands FarmFair, November 4, 5 and 6, it will involve about 70 of the top regional 4-H judges in Alberta.

Wiegman says about 10 judges from each region of the province have been selected to compete in the Edmonton event. These are multi-species livestock judges whose expertise includes sheep, swine, light horse, dairy and beef cattle judging.

The overall provincial winner will be part of an eight-member judging team which will travel to Regina November 23 to 27 to compete at Agribition.

Then in mid-January the provincial champion will fly to Colorado, to observe, and be a guest of the National Western Stock Show.

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Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

For immediate release

Good reaction to Agriculture's education material

Alberta teachers love Space Age Agriculture.

Comments made at workshops this fall indicate educators are truly impressed by the material developed by Alberta Agriculture for use in junior high classrooms.

Betty Gabert, co-ordinator of the department's Agriculture in the Classroom program, who has conducted the first in-service training sessions, says response has been great from all corners.

"We're just getting started in the in-service training sessions, but the teachers I have talked to give Space Age Agriculture an excellent report card," says Gabert. "They like the overall look of the material, they like the content, they like the fact it is so current and they especially like the fact that it's activity-based educational material."

Space Age Agriculture, developed for Grades 7 to 9, is designed to complement the new social studies and science curriculums recently developed by Alberta Education, which should be in use in provincial schools in 1989.

The highly motivational lessons in these two subject areas use agriculture as the basis to describe sophisticated scientific developments and the impact of international affairs.

Gabert says the best way she's found to explain to teachers how to use the material is to turn the workshops into classrooms. She has the teachers involved in doing the activities described in the course material so they can see how it all works.

"The teachers really get into the spirit of things and enjoy seeing how the activities develop," she says. "They get very excited about Space Age Agriculture and say 'this is the material I want in my classroom'.

"They like the fact that the courses come complete with all resource material needed and they like the fact that it's been designed as easy to use. In the education field it's what they call a 'Monday morning lesson'. It doesn't require a lot of preparation work - just a quick review and its ready to go."

(Cont'd)

Space Age Agriculture is one of three themes which have been developed under the Agriculture in the Classroom program, providing educational material for use in Grades 1 through 9. The other two themes developed in the last couple years are Pride in Alberta and Agriculture and Me.

A fourth theme for Grades 10 to 12, The Business of Agriculture, is now being written and designed.

For more information on the Agriculture in the Classroom program contact Betty Gabert at the agriculture education branch in Edmonton at 427-2403.

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Contact: Betty Gabert
427-2403

AGRI-NEWS

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October 31, 1988

For immediate release

This Week

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

For immediate release

Study assesses impact of implants on heifers

An Alberta researcher working with seven cattlemen in the Valleyview area is trying to determine if a new growth promotent for replacement heifers has any negative affect on fertility.

In the first year of a two-year study, Dr. Laura Rutter, a reproductive physiologist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton, says heifer calves implanted with Synovex-C in 1987 are heavier than untreated heifers, but the real measure will come at calving time in early 1989.

Rutter says having a look at calving dates and calving difficulty among the treated animals should give a good indication of the implant's capabilities.

The specialist, working with Syntex Animal Health, the manufacturers of Synovex-C, is conducting the work under a Farming for the Future research grant.

Growth promotents, available to the beef industry for several years, have been developed for use on steer calves. The implants work to stimulate the growth of the animal producing more pounds of beef at weaning or slaughter.

But Synovex-C is the first product on the market designed to also work on heifer calves to be kept as replacement animals.

Rutter says she wanted to see more evidence of how the product worked in a variety of farm-scale conditions.

"The objectives of this study were to determine the effect of Synovex-C implantation in heifers as it affects growth rate, pregnancy rate during the first, second and third three-week periods of the breeding season and calving difficulty," says Rutter

"Preliminary findings indicate no adverse affects and some growth benefits but we need to monitor the heifers through to 1989 before we can reach any conclusions.

"We are working closely with the manufacturers of the implant, who are assisting with project costs, because they are also interested in the outcome of the study."

(Cont'd)

The specialist says the implant has potential to produce a heavier heifer, which might benefit onset of cyclic activity and may reduce calving difficulty.

If these factors pan out, the product would have economic benefit to cattlemen.

Rutter says because weight and age are the two key factors contributing to a heifer reaching puberty, the implants may help heifers begin their reproduction cycle earlier.

"Proper management of replacement heifers such that they are bred early in their first breeding season and calve early in the calving season as two-year-olds has a major impact on lifetime cow productivity," says Rutter.

"Heifers conceiving early in the first breeding season typically continue to calve early and therefore wean heavier calves, through their productive lives."

In the study 171 heifer calves owned by the seven co-operating producers have been designated into two groups. Half of the replacement animals received one implant as calves, while the other half is being kept as a control group.

All animals were weighed and measured at the outset to provide comparison down the road.

As recommended by the manufacturer the treated calves, born in the spring of 1987, received implants at between 45 and 90 days of age.

Rutter says initial results at time of first breeding in the spring of 1988 showed implanted heifers weren't any taller but did average about 20 pounds heavier than non-implanted heifers. The specialist says this indicates the implants worked to produce more beef and not a greater bone structure.

Secondly, measurements showed the implanted heifers had larger pelvic areas - mostly in width - than did the non-implanted heifers.

A rectal examination was also made to determine at what stage of sexual maturity the heifers were at...were they cycling, had they been cycling for a while, or were they about to begin cycling?

(Cont'd)

Although the study animals will be pregnancy tested this fall, Rutter says it will be important to see the calving dates and assess the degree of calving difficulty between the two groups.

The heifers will be followed through the 1989 breeding season and pregnancy tested again in the fall of 1989.

The specialist says along with assessing the test animals, the study may also produce an opinion on other aspects, such as the size and weight of the calves born to these heifers and mammary development.

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Contact: Dr. Laura Rutter
427-5308

Increased North American hog supplies trigger second payment from national tripartite hog plan

Approximately 3,000 Alberta hog producers will share the second payout issued under the two-year-old National Tripartite Hog Stabilization Plan (APPMB). Payouts for Alberta are scheduled from the plan for 456,000 hogs sold through the APPMB and 10,000 non-board hogs reported sold in July, August, September of 1988.

Two years of extremely low feed grain prices encouraged North American hog producers to sharply escalate hog numbers, which, inevitably, resulted in depressed market prices, says Herb Lock, administrator of red meat stabilization plans in Alberta.

Alberta barley prices in the $54 to $58 per tonne range fed from conception to market weight to hogs sold this quarter, combined with a 14 quarter low Alberta price of $130.22 per 100 kilograms, resulted in sharply reduced margins this quarter.

The Canadian National Average hog selling price of $136.58 per 100 kilograms, when compared to the National Support price of $166.58 per 100 kilograms, resulted in this payout of $23.53 per hog.

This payment of $13.61 per 100 pounds, when added to the average Alberta producers pool price for this quarter, increases the market return to Alberta producers to a quarterly average of $160.23 per 100 kilograms or $72.68 per 100 pounds.

Overall costs of production for Alberta hogs were calculated at $65.53 per hog including $46.98 per hog for feed which compared favorably with the average Canadian cost of production of $82.10 per hog.

Lock says cheques from Ottawa for hogs sold through the Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board are expected to be in the mail by late November. Producers who provided premiums for non-board sales by the October 15 deadline can expect payments at the same time.

(Cont'd)

The National Tripartite Stabilization Plan for hogs uses a cost of production plus a guaranteed margin approach to stabilize market returns to hog producers in Canada. Payments are made equally to all enrolled Canadian hog producers regardless of their specific cost of production or market prices. This approach is designed to maintain market neutrality and not encourage hog production in any specific region of Canada, by providing the same level of support across Canada.

Detailed cost of production information for Alberta and Canadian production in general is available by contacting Centralized Program Support, Alberta Agriculture, 3rd Floor, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta.

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Contact: Herb Lock
422-9167

For immediate release

Irrigation expansion guidelines being developed

The Alberta Water Resources Commission and Alberta Environment are expected to present recommendations to the provincial government later this year setting limits to irrigation expansion in southern Alberta.

The guidelines, based on input received during the commission's public information sessions and formal hearings, will note while there is room for some growth in irrigation, there is a limited water resource which cannot handle all expectations.

Commission chairman and Dunvegan MLA Glen Clegg, says there is now a clear need for guidelines to limit irrigation expansion.

"Guidelines will ensure that adequate flows are maintained in various reaches of the main rivers in the South Saskatchewan River basin," he says. " They will also provide a basis for both irrigation districts and private irrigators to plan their investment for future expansion.

"The process of developing irrigation expansion guidelines has included a number of years of water management planning by Alberta Environment, public hearings by the Water Resources Commission, and the recent series of open houses. Recommended guidelines are expected to be presented to the provincial government by the end of this year."

Information available at the open houses held in September showed the current irrigated area of about 1.3 million acres in the South Saskatchewan River Basin could be expanded to close to 1.7 million acres with the available water supply.

Known demands for irrigation, however, exceed supply and would push this total to over two million acres. In the Oldman River Basin, which forms part of the South Saskatchewan River Basin, the potential shortfall could be more than 300,000 acres, even after completion of the Oldman River Dam.

(Cont'd)

While commission recomendations will specifically address the needs of agriculture, they also take into consideration the resource demands of non-agricultural uses.

The commission's most recent public open houses where held in five Alberta centres in mid-September. The sessions in High River, Brooks, Medicine Hat, Pincher Creek and Lethbridge provided information on the supply and demand for water in the South Saskatchewan River Basin, particularly concerning irrigation development, and sought public input.

The information available at the open house may still be obtained through the Water Resources Commission, Room 910 Harley Court, 10045 - 111 Street, Edmonton, or through the offices of Alberta Environment in Calgary or Lethbridge.

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Contact: Alf Birch
Executive Director
Alberta Water Resources Commission
422-4232

For immediate release

Alberta strawberry production - a growing alternative

Although acreage numbers are small compared to wheat, barley and canola, strawberries represent one more cash crop option for farmers looking to diversify their production base, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Lloyd Hausher, a fruit specialist with the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks says the strawberry segment of the Alberta berry industry is experiencing rapid growth.

"An industry which was nearly non-existent three years ago is now very evident across the province," he says. "In 1988 there were about 250 acres planted to strawberries and nearly 200 of those acres were in berry production. Planned plantings for 1989 are substantial."

Hausher says although these numbers seem minute compared to grains and oilseeds, its a segment that should not be ignored.

"When production figures and gross returns are examined a viable alternative crop develops," he says.

"Producers, whose average yields four to five years ago were 3,000 to 4,000 pounds per acre are now reaching in excess of 10,000 pounds per acre. Producers are also now receiving an average of $7 per four litres (5.5 lbs) of berries, whereas three years ago they were receiving less that $4 per four litres."

The specialist says recent releases of hardy, high yielding, good quality Junebearing strawberry varieties such as Kent, Glooscap and Mic Mac has led to increased plantings by both established and new producers.

He says the quality of these berries is far superior to past Junebearers available in Alberta, leading to an increase in their value at the farm gate.

"A new type of strawberry called day-neutrals have had a major impact on the Alberta scene in the last two years," says Hausher. "Junebearing varieties set fruit buds during the fall of the preceeding year (short days), and fruit for a four to six week season."

(Cont'd)

Day-neutral varieties including Tristar, Hecker and Fern are not dependent on day length to set fruit and will flower from shortly after planting until freeze-up. An estimated 45-acres of this new type strawberry was in production in Alberta in 1988.

Junebearing strawberry varieties are not harvested in the year of planting, but are cropped for three to four years following. Day-neutral varieties are cropped in the planting year primarily, as they may or may not survive the winter. Fruit quality and yield production of the day-neutral varieties is also good, says Hausher.

The specialist says consumers can now buy good quality Alberta-grown strawberries at the farm gate from mid-June until early October.

"Prospective strawberry growers should keep in mind the basic requirements desired prior to establishment," says Hausher. "These include: location near high-population centres, adequate irrigation availability, shelter, soil and climatic conditions, and of most importance a high degree of management ability."

For more information on strawberry production in Alberta contact Lloyd Hausher in Brooks at 363-3391.

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Contact: Lloyd Hausher
363-3391

October 31, 1988 10

For immediate release

Alberta 4-H delegates return from national conference

Two Alberta 4-H members have recently returned from an eight-day visit to Manitoba where they attended a national conference and got a first hand look at life in that prairie province.

Corie Kohut of Sherwood Park, a nine-year member of the Bremner Light Horse 4-H Club and Jodi Maull of Metisko, a six-year member of the Metisko-Czar Beef 4-H Club were in Manitoba to attend the 1988 National 4-H Careers Conference from October 12th - 16th.

They were among 16 other 4-H delegates from across Canada and 40 senior 4-H members from Manitoba in a conference aimed at guiding members in choosing a career and encouraging them to consider agriculture in making this choice.

Prior to the mid-October conference, Corie and Jodi had the opportunity to experience and become familiar with day to day life in Manitoba first hand by spending time with a host family.

Later at the conference in Winnipeg they participated in a program consisting of industry visits and tours, career counselling seminars and simulated job interviews with representatives from government and industry.

The delegates also had time during the program to tour Winnipeg and participate in activities with their fellow delegates.

The trip, made possible through the sponsorship of Westeel-Rosco Limited, Prairie Pools Inc., and Air Canada, Ottawa Sales Office, gave delegates an opportunity to learn the extent of career opportunities available in the agriculture industry and appreciate the importance of agriculture in Canada's economy.

They are also better able to make career choices, set goals and prepare for their futures.

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Marguerite Stark
Provincial 4-H Camping & Exchange Specialist
AIRDRIE, Alberta
948-8510

Jodi Maull
R.R. #1
METISKO, Alberta

Corie Kohut
52535 - Rg. Rd. 225
SHERWOOD PARK, Alberta

October 31, 1988
For immediate release

Leaner meat provides less fat, calories

Although it may cost a few cents more, health conscious consumers concerned about the amount of fat in their diets should consider buying different grades of meat, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Aileen Whitmore says as an example, switching from regular ground beef to extra lean ground beef will reduce both the calorie and fat content in the daily diet.

Whitmore, the department's provincial food and nutrition specialist, says although this latest recommendation contradicts much of the traditional advice given over the years, it reflects the new consumer trends.

She says recent surveys indicate that fat tops the list of consumer concerns about the nutritional content of the foods in their grocery carts.

Using the ground beef example the specialist says supermarkets usually carry three types of ground beef: regular (no more than 30 per cent fat), lean (no more that 23 per cent fat), and extra lean (no more than 17 per cent fat).

"Once the ground beef has been cooked, regular ground beef contains 19.46 per cent total fat, lean contains 17.64 per cent total fat, and extra lean contains 15.80 per cent total fat," she says.

"Eating extra lean ground beef rather than regular ground beef does result in a nine per cent decrease in caloric content, a 10.5 per cent decrease in calories from fat, and a 19 per cent reduction in total fat including saturated fatty acids."

The specialist says recent research has also shown the method of cooking affects the fat levels and final caloric content of meat patties. Of the six different cooking methods analyzed (electric broiling, charbroiling, roasting, convection heating, frying, and microwaving), microwaving produced cooked ground beef patties with the lowest fat and caloric content.

(Cont'd)

"By lowering the fat and calories from fat, you increase the concentration of the B vitamins, iron, phosphorus, and zinc in the beef consumed," says Whitmore. "So a change from regular to extra lean ground beef has many beneficial effects."

Along with buying different grades and cuts, many consumers are also trying different dishes which use less meat.

"People, again concerned about fat content in diets, are looking at meat more as an ingredient in a dish, as opposed to a dish on its own," she says.

The specialist says regardless of the cooking technique and even considering the amount of waste in regular meat grades, extra lean meats will cost more.

She says consumers concerned about their diet will have to make the decision between saving money or cutting calories.

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Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

October 31, 1988
For immediate release

New crop statistician appointed

A southern Alberta native, who recently earned a master's of science degree in Agriculture economics from the University of Manitoba, has been appointed Alberta Agriculture's provincial crop statistician.

Michelle Timko, who was born in the Brooks area, has been named to the post replacing Keir Packer who resigned earlier this year.

MICHELLE TIMKO

Timko, who attended both the University of Guelph and the University of Manitoba, will be responsible for compiling and monitoring crop production and yield information across the province and providing statistical information to both department staff members and the agriculture industry.

Her appointment was recently announced by Chuck Sterling, head of the department's statistics branch.

After completing high school, Timko attended the University of Guelph earning her bachelor of science degree in agriculture in 1983.

During those university years she worked two summers as an assistant district agriculturist in Bow Island and three summers at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

After graduation she spent several months touring Australia and New Zealand and worked as a freelance agricultural writer.

In the fall of 1984 Timko accepted a teaching position at Centralia College of Agricultural Technology in Huron Park, near London, Ontario. She served two years as an instructor of agricultural economics, farm business management, business arrangements and commodity futures, before enrolling at the University of Manitoba to complete her masters degree in agriculture economics. She graduated this fall.

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Contact: Michelle Timko
427-4011

For immediate release

Lowes appointed head of Airdrie veterinary lab

A former veterinary pathologist with the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture has been named head of Alberta Agriculture's regional veterinary lab in Airdrie.

Dr. Norman Lowes, who most recently worked in Regina, has taken over the south central Alberta post.

His appointment was announced by Dr. Nick Nation head of Alberta Agriculture's pathology branch.

Lowes, who was born and raised on a mixed farm in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with his doctor of veterinary medicine degree in 1972.

He entered veterinary practice in Manitoba for two years before returning to the U of S, completing his masters of veterinary science specializing in veterinary clinical pathology in 1976.

Since then Lowes has held several positions in both private and public sector laboratories.

The Airdrie regional diagnostic laboratory provides a consulting veterinary pathology service for veterinarians, livestock producers, agri-business and other animal owners in the south central region.

It is one of four labs through which Alberta Agriculture delivers veterinary diagnostic services. The other labs are located in Lethbridge, Edmonton and Fairview.

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Contact: Dr. Norman Lowes
948-8575

October 31, 1988 15

For immediate release

Manitoba native appointed Drumheller DHE

A graduate of the home economics program at the University of Manitoba has been named Alberta Agriculture's new district home economist in Drumheller.

Cindy Cavenagh, who graduated in 1984, has taken over the position replacing Catherine Wahl who resigned earlier this year.

Born and raised at Stony Mountain, Manitoba, a community near Winnipeg, Cavenagh spent two years after graduation involved in mission and development work in the Philippines.

She returned to Canada in 1987 and worked in Winnipeg for a few months before accepting the Drumheller position.

Her appointment was announced by Louise Starling, regional home economist in Airdrie.

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Contact: Cindy Cavenagh
823-5740

Agri-News Briefs

BROCHURE PROMOTES SAFE HANDLING OF ANHYDROUS AMMONIA

Esso Petroleum Canada in co-operation with Alberta Agriculture has produced a brochure promoting the safe handling of anhydrous ammonia fertilizer. The brochure called "Scratching the Surface on Safety" contains a message from Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga and several key points on how to handle anhydrous ammonia products and application equipment. Initially released in the Peace River region, the brochure provides some facts about anhydrous ammonia, reviews safety procedures in the field, lists action to be taken in the event of an emergency and provides a check list to follow. There is also a quiz section on the back panel, which is to be returned to local Esso agents. James Hladky, operations assistant for Esso Chemicals, says farmers returning the brochure will receive additional information from the local agent as well as pocket size first aid kits, squeeze bottles and safety booklets. For more information contact Eric Jones at Alberta Agriculture's farm safety division at 427-2186 or James Hladky with Esso Chemicals at 468-8642.

REDA OFFERS LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS

REDA, the Rural Education and Development Association, is sponsoring a series of leadership workshops early in 1989 designed to improve communications and management skills. The 14th annual Introductory Leadership Skills Workshop will be held at the Goldeye Centre, January 23 to 27. The 11th annual Intermediate Leadership Skills Workshop will be held at Lake Louise, February 20 to 24. The third leadership program, "Management for Volunteer Executives" is being offered at Goldeye Centre also February 20 to 24. Each workshop is geared for a specific level of leadership experience. At each of the three programs, participants' past experiences and workshop experiences are used to develop understanding and skills that can be used in community settings. Brochures and applications for the REDA leadership workshops are available from REDA, 14815 - 119 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 2N9 or phone 451-5959.

(Cont'd)

HEALTHY CALVES MEAN IMPROVED PROFITS

Raising healthy calves and replacement heifers can make a big difference to a dairy producer's profit picture, says a recently released Alberta Agriculture publication. The four-page factsheet says because a loss of one out of five calves can reduce profits by nearly 40 percent, it is important to pay attention to health management. "A greater number of healthy replacement heifers gives the producer more choices when selecting replacement animals," reports the publication prepared by Dr. Gerald Ollis with the department's health management branch. "This permits the dairy producer to raise the culling standards for the cow herd. In well managed dairy herds, a number of good quality replacement heifers may be available for sale and can be a significant source of income for the farm operation." The publication describes a sound health management program and looks at some of the common health problems which can affect production. The factsheet discusses the type of management required and reviews vaccination recommendations. For a copy of "Health Management of Replacement Dairy Heifers" Agdex FS 412/661-1 contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

FEED WASTAGE ADDS TO HOG PRODUCTION COSTS

Reducing feed wastage is one of the simplest ways of reducing the cost of producing hogs, says a report in the most recent issue of the Beef and Bacon newsletter. Prepared by Alberta Agriculture swine production specialists, the article suggests several ways to improve efficiency. To conserve feed it suggests installing self feeders, checking everyday to make sure the self feeders are adjusted and working properly, repair broken or damaged self feeders immediately, and don't overcrowd the hogs. The report suggests four hogs for every self feeder space is a good rule of thumb. For a complete copy of the report on ways to reduce hog production costs obtain a copy of the October newsletter by calling either Alberta Agriculture's regional office in Barrhead at 674-8248 or in Red Deer at 340-5336.

AGRI-NEWS Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

November 7, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 7, 1988
For immediate release

Producers harvest record canola crop

The Canadian canola situation and outlook varies greatly from that of other oilseeds in the coming year. In a year when production of other world oilseeds will be down, Canadian farmers will harvest a record 4.2 million tonne canola crop.

Market analyst Charlie Pearson says, "The major negative factor for Canadian canola prices is the domestic situation--a record Canadian canola crop in a year when Canada still has only three major canola buyers, Japan, Mexico and the domestic crushing industry."

Assuming total canola usage of four million tonnes, this would result in a carryover at the end of 1988-89 crop year of approximately 850,000 tonnes, a 200,000 tonne increase from the July 31, 1988 level."

He says two major factors could affect Canadian canola prices: the forecasted increases in canola carryover at the end of the 1988-89 crop year and concerns about long-term shutdowns in the crushing industry due to poor crush margins.

"An extended shutdown by a major crusher could push July 31, 1989 canola carryovers to over one million tonnes," says Pearson.

"Given the tight world oilseed supplies, Canadian canola exports will likely increase slightly in the coming year," he says. Japanese imports of Canadian canola should be between 1.5 and 1.8 million tonnes. Mexican imports of Canadian canola are expected to be in the range of 250,000 to 300,000 tonnes during the coming year.

Pearson says canola prices are forecast to remain in the $310 to $340 per tonne range during the late fall and early winter.

Canola acreage is expected to be down slightly in 1989-90 because of the higher prices expected for wheat and feed grains, and the amount of canola that has been included in crop rotations in recent years.

(Cont'd)

Producers harvest record canola crop (cont'd)

"We anticipate that Alberta elevator/crusher bids for canola during the fall of 1989 will range from $280 to $300 per tonne," says Pearson. "Growers should be watching the November 1989 Winnipeg rapeseed futures very carefully with the idea of pricing a portion of next year's crop."

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Contact: Charlie Pearson
427-5386

November 7, 1988
For immediate release

Wheat supplies down substantially

Total Canadian wheat supplies are expected to be down substantially in 1988-89, says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst, reflecting both a sizeable reduction in the Canadian wheat carryover on July 31, 1988, and the drought-reduced 1988 wheat crops.

"This situation will result in substantial reductions in exports during the coming year," says Charlie Pearson.

In his latest situation and outlook, Pearson says Canadian 1988 wheat production is estimated by Statistics Canada to be 15.5 million tonnes, down 40 per cent from last year's 26.0 million tonnes. Combined with this year's carry-in of 7.2 million tonnes, this results in total supplies of only 22.6 million tonnes, a 42 per cent decline from 1987-88.

Canadian wheat exports are forecast to decline to 11.0 million tonnes, less than half the level achieved in 1987-88.

"Canadian Wheat Board adjustment payments/final payments on the top grade of hard red spring wheat are expected to be in the $30 to $40 per tonne range," says Pearson.

The reasons for this optimism are:

1. International wheat prices have improved from those of the past two years.
2. The CWB has raised the asking prices for wheat in both Vancouver and Thunder Bay by $60 per tonne.
3. Given the reduced total supplies of Canadian wheat, the CWB will have to restrict sales to traditional customers with long-term agreements or to those willing to pay the CWB asking prices. The CWB will not have to market wheat agressively to countries targeted by EC or U.S. subsidy markets.

(Cont'd)

Wheat supplies down substantially(cont'd)

4. With smaller prairie wheat production, a larger portion of this year's crops will move through Vancouver/Prince Rupert enabling the CWB to take advantage of the $20 per tonne premiums in Pacific coast ports, in addition to avoiding the higher St. Lawrence seaway transportation costs.

Overall, Canadian wheat pricing prospects are much brighter in 1988-89 than for the past several years.

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Contact: Charlie Pearson
427-5386

November 7, 1988
For immediate release

Strong demand for barley continues

Charlie Pearson, a market analyst with Alberta Agriculture, says the Canadian barley situation mirrors that of the world coarse grain situation - tighter supplies for the coming year.

"The Canadian 1988 barley situation is forecast at 10 million tonnes, down four million tonnes from 1987," he says. "Canadian farmers cut back barley acreage this past spring in response to its poorer profitability compared to other crops."

Barley yields this year vary considerably across the prairies, ranging from extremely poor in the drought areas to well above average in central and northern Alberta.

Alberta farmers are forecast to have harvested 4.7 million acres of barley in 1988, down from 5.6 million acres in 1987. Average Alberta barley yields are forecast to be nearly 55 bushels per acre, a one bushel per acre increase from the previous crop year.

Canadian barley exports in 1988-89 are expected to be approximately three million tonnes, a 50 per cent decline from the previous year. Domestic barley disappearance will remain close to the last few years, reflecting similar livestock numbers. Canadian barley carryover is forecast to decline to minimum pipeline levels of around two million tonnes.

"Alberta non-board barley prices in central and northern Alberta are expected to achieve $115 to $120 per tonne by early winter," says Pearson. "And feed barley prices in southern Alberta will maintain a $15 premium to other areas of the province."

International barley prices are currently around $150 per tonne Canadian, double that of a year ago. This should provide opportunity for a CWB barley final payment in the $10 to $15 per tonne range.

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Contact: Charlie Pearson
427-5386

November 7, 1988
For immediate release

Technique can stimulate estrus in beef cattle

Separating cows and calves for 48 hours at the start of the breeding season can help bring more cows into heat sooner without adversely affecting the health of animals, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Dr. Laura Rutter says the technique of using 48-hour calf removal to stimulate estrus or heat isn't new, but it isn't widely used by commercial cow/calf operators.

She says if farmers can put up with the noise and some inconvenience for those two days the procedure can save time and perhaps earn them more money.

Rutter says purebred operators breeding by artificial insemination (AI) will find considerably more cows ready to service at the same time.

And commercial cattlemen might best use the system to bring a group of late-calvers or first-calf heifers into heat sooner, which means they would be more in step with the rest of the herd.

Working with southern Alberta cattleman, John Campbell of Black Diamond, Rutter has been testing the technique under an Alberta Agriculture Farming for the Future research project. The project involving about 128 head of beef cattle was launched in 1987 and will continue through to the fall of 1989.

Her findings show there is no adverse affects on cows or calves and several benefits for the producer.

By separating cows and calves for 48 hours, the reproductive physiologist with the department in Edmonton, says farmers are essentially playing a trick on Mother Nature.

"There are two things which prevent a cow from returning to heat after she has calved," says Rutter. "The first is sensory inhibition caused by suckling. During the first three weeks postpartum, stimulation of the nerve endings in the cows teats sends a message to the brain which prevents return to normal heat cycle. After three weeks the cow is able to escape or override the inhibition.

(Cont'd)

"The second factor preventing return to heat is the nutrient drain on the cow during lactation. So much energy is required to produce milk that the cow's system naturally delays return to normal estrus."

Rutter says, with these two factors acting as a "brake" to delay heat, removing the calf for 48 hours releases the brakes.

In the Black Diamond project, about half the herd was "treated" with calf removal while the other half was kept as the control group. She said except for the calf removal, Campbell followed his usual breeding program.

On Day 1 of the breeding season half the calves were removed from their mothers. At the end of 48 hours they were returned. Campbell observed the cows for four more days to detect heat and bred those that cycled.

On Day 6 of the breeding season, as he routinely does each year, he injected all cows in both groups that had not already been bred with Estrumate to synchronize heat.

He continued to monitor the animals and breed until Day 10 when he put all cattle out to pasture with clean-up bulls for the remainder of the 45-day breeding season.

The study determined removing the calves for 48 hours had no adverse affect on the young animals. There was no increase in the number of sick animals in the calf-removal group compared to the control group, and there was no evidence that the calves from the treated group had any lower weaning weight than those in the control group.

Likewise the cows in the calf-removal group showed no more ill effects than the ones in the control group.

But Campbell, who takes advantage of AI, found about twice as many cows in the treated group were ready to breed in the first six days of the breeding season compared to cows in the control group.

Because twice as many cows in the 48-hour calf removal group were bred in the first six days, Rutter expected an improved calving profile in the "treated" cows compared with the controls. But, both the length of calving season and the calving profile were similar between the two groups.

Rutter concludes from the results of the first year of the study that a cow herd in good body condition, geared for a 45-day breeding season in conjunction with a successful synchronization program, does not benefit from 48-hour calf removal.

(Cont'd)

"For this producer the only apparent benefit was saving time in AI work," says Rutter. "More cows were cycling in a shorter period which means the farmer could get the breeding work done sooner and then turn to other jobs on the farm."

The specialist says that cow-calf operators not involved in AI may get the most benefit using the technique on a select group of cattle rather than the whole herd.

"The technique would probably best serve a commercial cattleman for a group of late calvers or for first-calf heifers," she says. "The main cow herd in a pasture breeding situation with adequate bull power should be normally cycling when the breeding season begins.

"By using 48-hour calf removal the farmer would be able to get that select group to come into heat sooner - to be ahead of the game. The animals would be cycling quicker after calving and hopefully be bred sooner in the breeding season which means that next spring they would calve sooner and be more in line with the main herd."

She says earlier calves from the select group should translate into heavier weaning weights.

Rutter says cows with unthrifty or sick calves should not be subjected to the 48-hour calf removal technique. She also says while calves which are kept away from their mothers for two days probably won't be interested in hay or other rations, they should have access to plenty of water and a good creep feed.

"It makes for a noisy two days and if you don't have good cattle handling facilities you could run into problems with calves and cows getting through fences or corrals," says Rutter.

"It's a technique that's been used for years by researchers to stimulate estrus in research animals and if it fits in with a producer's management it can provide him with benefits."

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Contact: Dr. Laura Rutter
427-5083

November 7, 1988
For immediate release

Interest in saskatoons remains steady

Nearly 100 Alberta farmers, interested in diversifying their agricultural base, have thrown their long-term support toward establishing a viable saskatoon berry industry in the province.

Lloyd Hausher, a small-fruit production specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Brooks, says about 94 farmers now have some 360 acres planted to saskatoons with about 55 acres producing fruit on a commerical scale.

Hausher says another 40 farmers have expressed serious interest in getting involved bringing the area planned to be established in saskatoon orchards in the next few years to several hundred more acres.

"Alberta's saskatoon industry was born in the early 1970's and has been steadily developing ever since," says Hausher, who works at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center. "A survey completed in early 1988 revealed over 360 acres planted of which 55 acres were producing. An additional 600 acres were also being planned to be established by those surveyed."

The specialist says saskatoons, which can be grown in almost every region of the province, should be seen as alternative cash crop, to be grown along with other agricultural enterprises. He says because it takes several years before the crop generates any returns it is not likely to become a producer's sole source of income.

"Production of saskatoons takes a relatively long-time commitment," he says. "Generally saskatoons do not begin to bear fruit until the third or fourth season. Maturity requires seven to eight years, and the break even point takes 10 to 11 years."

Hausher says primary management factors for saskatoon producers include providing adequate shelter, irrigation, weed and pest control, and having proper soil conditions for the plants.

(Cont'd)

A mature crop of saskatoons should produce between 3,000 and 4,000 pounds of berries per acre, which could be sold at 1988 prices for between $1 and $1.50 a pound.

"This was a very good year for saskatoon production across the province," says Hausher. "Producers received average to above average yields. Wild saskatoons were also abundant, which did result in some marketing problems by pick-your-own growers."

The specialist says most of Alberta's commercial saskatoons are marketed as pick-your-own, although substantial quantities this year entered the frozen pie, wine, and syrup markets.

He says there is a limit to the number of pick-your-own acreages because they should be near relatively large population centres. He says the industry has the greatest opportunity for expansion in the area of processed saskatoon products such as syrup, jellies, wine and pies.

"With increasing acreages beginning to bear fruit and additional acreages being planted, producers will be turning to retail markets," he predicts. "This will require the development of economical commercial harvesters, storage and packaging facilities, and market development.

"The interest in the native alternative (saskatoon) crop remains strong and industry growth is inevitable."

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Contact: Lloyd Hausher
362-3391

November 7, 1988
For immediate release

Special crops research aids diversification

Even with grain prices rebounding in 1988, Alberta farmers haven't lost sight of the value of special crops as a means to help diversify their agricultural and economic base.

Supporting this diversification, work continues on a year-round basis at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks to test and develop a wide range of non-traditional crops which can provide significant economic returns to producers.

Dr. Refe Gaudiel, who leads the special crops research work for Alberta Agriculture, says dozens of new crops and crop varieties are tested each year to determine their suitability for Alberta growing conditions and potential to tap into emerging market niches.

"When we talk about special crops we're not just talking about some of the more exotic herbs, spices and essential oils crops," says Gaudiel.

"We're also talking about those crops which have become quite common in Alberta in the past few years, but with which we have not had a lot of experience or with which we don't see the wide scale production such as we see in wheat, barley and canola.

"In our work at the centre we are involved in three major activities - applied research, extension and development work."

He says research, which consumes as much as 60 per cent of his time, also has three major components.

"One aspect of research is varietal testing and developing crops which are adaptable to Alberta growing conditions," he says. "We also have to look at the agronomic side. Once we have a crop which is suitable we have to learn the best way to grow it. What seeding rate to use and what row spacing to use...that sort of information. And we also have to look at quality aspects. This is most important from a marketing viewpoint where a particular crop has to have a certain quality to be of value."

(Cont'd)

DR. REFE GAUDIEL, CENTRE, TALKS WITH SOME OF VISITORS LOOKING over the special crops demonstration plots at the Brooks centre.

The special crops program concentrates on four major crop categories - Pulse crops; other crops such as sunflower, safflower buckwheat and canary seed; herbs and spices; and other new crops.

"Pulse crops such as peas, beans and lentils have become a very big area of interest in Alberta in the last few years." he says. "And of course we try to encourage farmers to produce them not just as a cash crop but as a full management tool. They fit very well in a rotation with cereal crops to provide a break in disease cycles, to assist in weed control, to improve soil fertility and to help spread the workload over the crop production season."

The specialist says variety testing of pulse crops includes about five main types of dry beans, several field pea varieties, lentils, faba beans, other legumes such as lathyrus, lupins and chickpeas.

(Cont'd)

He says each one of these crops requires work to develop the best varieties for specific purposes and best growing techniques for Alberta. Along with improving yield, another common goal is to develop varieties with early maturity.

Gaudiel says some crops such as chickpeas need to be developed with more disease resistance, while with others such as peas and dry beans, height and leafiness growth habits may be a characteristic which needs to be changed, and in still others such as lathyrus the crop needs to be altered to make it a suitable livestock feed.

Newer crops, such as safflower and canary seed, have been grown mainly for bird seed, and sunflowers has been grown both for the confectionary and birdseed market. Gaudiel is working with varieties of safflower that may become suitable for oilseeds.

The researcher says as many as 80 to 100 different kinds of herbs and spices are being studied at the research centre.

"We have been working with herbs and spices for about 15 years to see how they can be developed for use in the home garden and now we are looking at them for commercial production," he says.

Gaudiel says some of the herbs and spices have already established an economic presence in the province. Mustard sales to the United States amount to about $20 million each year, and Alberta producers are growing as much as 1,000 acres each in caraway and coriander for commercial processing.

"Our objective is to get as much information as possible out to Alberta farmers about these crops so that they can make the decision on how they will suit their farm management ability and their diversification plans," says Gaudiel.

"It is an ongoing process about which we learn a little more every year, but at the same time we also come up with new questions to answer."

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Contact: Dr. Refe Gaudiel
362-3391

November 7, 1988
For immediate release

New DA appointed in Athabasca

A 1987 graduate from the University of Alberta has been appointed one of Alberta Agriculture's district agriculturists in Athabasca.

Michael Kirylchuk, who was born and raised on a mixed grain and beef farm in the Lac La Biche area, has been appointed to the post replacing Lorne Cole, who was transferred to Hanna earlier this year.

MICHAEL KIRYLCHUK

Kirylcuk will share DA responsibilities in Athabasca with Gary Berger.

His appointment was recently announced by John Tackaberry, director of Alberta Agriculture's northwest region.

After completing high school, Kirylchuk attended the University of Alberta in Edmonton where he obtained his bachelor of science degree in the general program in 1987.

During his university years he worked two summers as assistant district agriculture in Lac La Biche and also as an assistant agricultural fieldman.

After graduation he worked for 18 months with the Alberta Crow Benefit Offset Program in Edmonton, before accepting the Athabasca posting.

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Contact: Michael Kirylchuk
675-2252

November 7, 1988
For immediate release

4-H leaders attend Montana Leader's Forum

Eight 4-H leaders returned to Alberta with new skills and fresh ideas recently after attending the annual Montana Leader's Forum in Glendive, Montana, October 20 to 25. The trip was made possible through Alberta Power Limited and TransAlta Utilities Corporation, who have sponsored 4-H leaders to attend this forum since 1964.

Four leaders were sponsored by TransAlta Utilities Corporation. They are Wallace and Carolyn Kreil of Eckville, leaders of the Gilby 4-H Beef Club; Jo-Ann Mueller of Busby, Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club leader; and Audrey Priddell of Red Deer, leader of the Red Deer 4-H Horseman Club.

The four leaders sponsored by Alberta Power Limited are Robert Patterson of Grande Prairie, leader of the Grande Prairie 4-H Beef Club; Lorraine Congdon of Heisler, leader of the Heisler Hemmers 4-H Sewing Club; Charlie Gould of Rosalind, leader of the Rosalind 4-H Beef Club; and Helen Nichols of Castor, leader of the Castor 4-H Multi Club.

The leaders began their journey on October 20 with a send-off luncheon in Red Deer with representatives of the sponsoring utility companies. After an overnight stop in Great Falls, Montana, the leaders drove to Glendive for the Montana Leader's Forum which ran until October 23. The leaders then enjoyed two days of sightseeing while travelling home.

The 1988 leader's forum offered a variety of workshops with topics ranging from situational leadership and building self-esteem in 4-H members, to computers and rocketry. Other workshops dealt with projects, record books and judging. The Alberta leaders also participated in recreational activities with their Montana counterparts.

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Contact: Marguerite Stark
948-8510

Agri-News Briefs

CONFERENCE INVESTIGATES DEMAND ON WATER IN SOUTHERN ALBERTA

The Joint Conference on Water Management, November 21 to 23, will address water resource management in Alberta as it faces population growth in a semi-arid climate. The conference is a joint effort of the Canadian Water Resources Association (CWRA) and the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association (AIPA). The Lethbridge conference will investigate the demand on the water resources of the South Saskatchewan River Basin by an ever-increasing population. It will also reflect on the historical development of southern Alberta at the turn of the century when water resources were an exploitable resource seen then as plentiful. The conference will also touch on the technologies of water supply, water storage, conveyance systems, municipal efficiencies, pollution controls, fisheries protection and other technical aspects of water control. Tours are planned of the Oldman River Dam site and the "Head Smashed in Buffalo Jump" site. Cost for the conference if registered before November 4 is $100; after November 4, $125. For registration information contact: Mrs. J.A. Ross, 2014 - 14 Avenue North, Lethbridge, Alberta T1H 1V8, phone (403) 328-4084.

OLDS COLLEGE HOLDS AWARENESS DAY

Olds College is holding its first Career Fair and Awareness Day on November 18 to feature career opportunities that exist through agriculture-related training. The Career Fair provides the opportunity for people to learn how the skills they gain in one program can be transferred from one job to another. The Career Fair and Awareness Day will run from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Student Alumni Centre. Special activities include hourly farm tours, information sessions on the programs, and a forum where more than 35 industry representatives will talk about opportunities in their areas. There is no charge. For further information contact Siobhan Avery at 556-8238 or Mona Hari at 556-4611.

(Cont'd)

THREE SHEEP SEMINARS OFFERED IN NOVEMBER

Sheep producers looking for an opportunity to brush up on their sheep management skills can choose from three seminars being offered by Alberta Agriculture this month. The Lethbridge Sheeperama seminars, November 14 and 15, will involve morning sessions directed primarily at beginning sheep producers and afternoon sessions of interest to all producers. The seminars will also include a tour of sheep operations in the Lethbridge area. Cost is $30 for November 14 which includes a barbecue supper, and $20 for November 15. Nisku Sheep Nite will be held November 15 starting at 7 p.m. at the Nisku Inn. Topics will include winter feeding programs, managing behavior to improve sheep production, and Canada's new breeds, the Arcotts. Millarville Lamb Day will be held November 16 at the Millarville Fair Grounds starting at 2 p.m. Several speakers will be there to discuss various sheep management topics and a lamb dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Cost for the day is $20; for the evening only (including dinner), $15. For more information on the Lethbridge or Millarville seminars contact Cathy Gallivan at 948-8517. For more information on the Nisku seminar contact Wray Whitmore at 427-5077.

CANOLA MEETING SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 15

Market analyst Don Bousquet of Farm Market News will discuss the present market outlook for canola at a November 15 meeting. The meeting, a joint effort of Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Canola Growers Association, will run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Moyer Recreation Centre in Josephburg. Speakers will also discuss such production issues as green seed, blackleg of canola, canola quality, Alberta food products and new canola varieties. The association will also be discussing the canola commission and a membership update. To register contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office. For more information contact Bill Chapman at 674-8259.

CORRECTION

In the October 31 Agri-News Briefs the article, "Brochure Promotes Safe Handling of Anyhdrous Ammonia", should have read, "James Hladky, operations assistant for Esso Petroleum NOT Esso Chemicals.

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
DEC - 2 1988

November 14, 1988

For immediate release

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Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 14, 1988
For immediate release

Agricultural education task force accepting submissions

A recently established task force given the job of examining the future education and training requirements of Alberta's agriculture industry, is now accepting submissions from interested individuals and organizations .

The team has been given the task of developing a strategy to be used as a blueprint for Alberta Government policy in agricultural education and training during the next five to 10 years.

The task force will be chaired by Dr. Roy Berg, the recently retired Dean of the University of Alberta's Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry. Dr. Berg will develop a workplan for the group and will guide its studies.

Berg indicates that the objective of the task force is to make recommendations to the government in four key areas: promoting public awareness and understanding of the agri-food industry, enabling farmers to enhance their technical and managerial skills, fostering a well-trained labor force for the agri-food industry, and encouraging an adequate supply of professional agrologists in the province.

When preparing submissions, individuals should assess the needs in any or all of these four areas, discuss their organization's role, if applicable, and identify any gaps or overlap that exists.

"It is anticipated that we will complete our work by the end of this year and make our recommendations shortly after," he says.

The task force will include representatives from a broad range of agricultural agencies and interests, including the province's agricultural colleges, the University of Alberta's Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, Unifarm, agricultural businesses, the Alberta Institute of Agrologists and the government departments of Agriculture, Education, Advanced Education and Career Development and Employment.

(Cont'd)

Agricultural education task force accepting submissions (cont'd)

Written submissions should be forwarded to the Agricultural Education Branch of Alberta Agriculture, Room 200, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. The task force would like to receive submissions by the first week of December.

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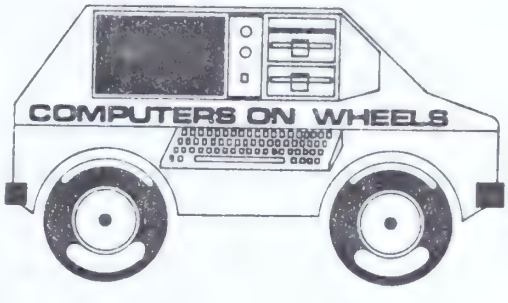
Contact: Dr. Roy Berg
662- 3826
432-3990

Warren Wismer
427-2402

November 14, 1988
For immediate release

Computers on Wheels back on the road

In response to continuing demand, Computers on Wheels is back on the road for a fourth consecutive season. With more than 100 courses booked to date by Alberta Agriculture district offices across the province, over 1,000 people will have the opportunity to learn more about computers and their applications in agriculture.



"Computers on Wheels is designed to meet the challenge of providing computer courses in any part of the province," says J. Wilson Loree, head of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch and chairman of the co-ordinating committee.

In the original project, two specially equipped vans transported portable computers and instructors to nearly 300 community halls and classrooms across Alberta.

Initially set up as a three-year project involving Alberta Agriculture, IBM Canada Ltd. and the University of Alberta, Computers on Wheels has successfully met its mandate to investigate new ways of extending knowledge about computers to adults in rural Alberta.

"Although the three-year project has been completed, Alberta Agriculture will continue to provide leadership in serving the farming public by providing the Computers on Wheels courses," says Loree.

He says in order to accommodate the increased demand for courses, Alberta's four agricultural colleges, in co-operation with Alberta Career Development and Employment, will participate with Alberta Agriculture in delivering this year's Computers on Wheels courses.

(Cont'd)

Computers on Wheels back on the road (cont'd)

"This expansion of resources will allow more producers to take advantage of the program than in any other season in the history of Computers on Wheels," he says.

The colleges involved are Fairview College in the Peace River region, Lakeland College in Vermilion, Lethbridge Community College and Olds College.

This season, producers will have a choice of five different courses: Introduction to Computers for Farm Use, Spreadsheet Application to Farm Management, Introduction to Computerized Farm Physical Records, Introduction to Computerized Bookkeeping, and Computerized Farm Financial Planning Worksheets.

"These courses were developed as part of the initial three-year project, and have been improved on as a result of experience gained over the course of the project," says Loree.

"The new computerized Farm Financial Planning Worksheets course will be offered on a trial basis to past and present participants of Alberta Agriculture's Gear Up Financially program," he adds.

Courses are booked through participating Alberta Agriculture district offices; the logistics are handled by engineering service's Skills Training Program, based in the Cardston district office.

For further information on Computers on Wheels courses coming to your area, contact your Alberta Agriculture district office.

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Contact: J. Wilson Loree
556-4213

Paul Gervais
556-4250

November 14, 1988
For immediate release

New microwave cooking instructions for meat

Considering the demands of today's fast-paced, up-beat lifestyle, it's obvious the microwave oven has an important role to play.

But despite the fact "microwavable" is one of today's latest buzzwords, and cooking with a microwave is both quick and cool, consumers remain reluctant to use a microwave for certain cooking activities.

For example, many people hesitate to microwave roasts of meat because they think the meat does not brown. However, according to an Alberta Agriculture specialist, microwaved roasts not only brown, they usually cook faster, shrink less and are juicier.

"Recommendations for microwaving meat have changed," says Aileen Whitmore, provincial foods and nutritionist specialist. "The majority of meat cuts should be microwaved at 30 to 50 per cent power instead of 100 per cent power as previously recommended."

She says the use of low power in comparison with high power microwave cooking, has been found to increase the flavor and tenderness of the meat.

"A less tender cut of meat cooked at lower power in a microwave oven can yield a product comparable with that obtained by conventional cooking," she says.

Tests showed that from the standpoint of flavor and tenderness, roasts that were frozen and cooked on low power were comparable to those cooked conventionally. Because of the long cooking period, these roasts were also brown.

The newer microwave models have a pulsing feature permitting the power to be set so that it goes on and off continuously. The off-cycle allows the heat to be evenly distributed throughout the food.

Automatically pulsed heating requires less preparation time and is more energy efficient than the manual on-off method, says Whitmore.

(Cont'd)

Beef rib eye roasts cooked by either the manual or automatic pulsed microwave method were comparable in juiciness and flavor to conventionally cooked roasts.

"Microwave cooking offers a convenient and energy-efficient way to prepare meat that compares favorably with meat cooked using traditional methods," says Whitmore.

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Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

November 14, 1988
For immediate release

Potomac horse fever in Alberta

Provincial veterinarians have confirmed that 10 horses, all from a small area east of Red Deer, have been exposed to Potomac horse fever (PHF).

All horses exhibited the same symptoms of high temperature, depression, loss of appetite and diarrhea. Only one horse died in this suspected outbreak.

According to Dr. Jane Pritchard, Potomac horse fever, or as it is now being called, equine monocytic ehrlichiosis (EME), has only recently been recognized and diagnosed in the United States.

The Alberta Agriculture veterinarian says, "This is the first time that serum samples from horses in Alberta have been tested and found positive for antibodies to the PHF organism. Two different labs in the United States performed the tests.

"It's very possible that the disease has been in Alberta for some time, but a test is not yet locally available and equine serum could not be checked," says Pritchard

PHF is caused by a Rickettsia bacterium called Ehrlichia risticii , which can infect all ages and breeds of horses. It is usually only seen between the months of May and September and primary transmission is believed to be by insects.

The veterinarian says the disease is comparable to flu because it can vary from mild to severe. Horses that recover have no lasting effects from the disease and develop an immunity to it.

PHF can be treated by a veterinarian. A vaccine against the disease is available in Canada.

Pritchard says the serology test used for Potomac horse fever only confirms prior exposure of the horses to the Erhlichia risticii bacteria. Other laboratory tests must be used to confirm that this bacterium has actually caused the "disease-picture" seen in the horses.

(Cont'd)

Potomac horse fever confirmed in Alberta (cont'd)

"Research is currently underway to discover how PHF spreads and where it spends the winter," says Pritchard. "Prevention and control of this disease will be difficult until we have this information.

"In 1989, we hope to confirm the presence of Ehrlichia risticii in affected horses by further laboratory testing. This will serve to increase our knowledge of PHF and help us to determine how widespread Potomac horse fever is in Alberta," she says.

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Contact: Jane Pritchard
948-8575

November 14, 1988
For immediate release

4-H members attend national conference in Toronto

Six Alberta 4-H members joined six fellow 4-H members from each of the other provinces, six guests from the United States and five guests from the United Kingdom in Toronto recently, for the 57th National 4-H Conference.

4-H personal development specialist Anita Styba, was the staff chaperone at this event. "The program, while providing an extremely beneficial learning experience, also allowed delegates to develop Canada-wide and international friendships," she says.

The theme of November 9 to 13 conference was "4-H Building for Tomorrow". Sessions dealt with personal development and the growth of 4-H in general. Session topics included Building Relationships, Building a Positive Me, Building a Fitter You, and Marketing 4-H and You.

The Alberta delegates who attended the conference were: Darryl Isrealson of Cadogan, Lisa Properzi of Westlock, Annette Kotowich of St. Paul, Darren Hueppelsheuser of Blackfalds, Sheena Kujula of Eckville and Jim Schneider of Bow Island.

On November 8, five 4-H club leaders joined the six delegates in Edmonton at a send-off banquet sponsored by the Alberta Wheat Pool. The leaders were preparing for their own conference in Toronto--the National 4-H Volunteer Leaders' Conference--being held at the same time.

While attending the conference, the delegates not only participated in workshops and discussion sessions, but learned to develop and express their opinions and ideas.

"They interacted with each other and with speakers in theme-related subjects, and discussed the highlights of their own 4-H careers," says Styba. "They were also given the chance to share opinions, ideas and attitudes with leader delegates in a joint session."

(Cont'd)

4-H members attend national conference in Toronto (cont'd)

During their stay in Toronto, the delegates also had an opportunity to attend the Royal Agriculture Winter Fair in Toronto, take a bus tour of the city, visit the CN Tower and attend live theatre.

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Contact: Marguerite Stark
948-8509

Editor's Note

The following is the first article in a seven-part series on farm business management planning, prepared by Alberta Agriculture production management specialist, Craig Edwards.

The series deals with some of the factors farmers and farm managers should consider in developing their own farm business management plans.

Ideally the series should run sequentially from part 1 to 7, but if space or scheduling becomes a problem, each article can stand alone. If not used as a series, some articles may require minor editing.

The articles vary in length, with part 1 being the longest at about 700 words or about 18 column inches, while most of the other instalments are about 300 words each or about eight column inches.

Topics to be covered over the seven weeks include:

Part 1 - Farm planning is a creative process
Part 2 - Procedures for planning
Part 3 - Economic principles used in farm planning
Part 4 - Making production decisions
Part 5 - Fertilizer economics
Part 6 - It's not too early for crop planning
Part 7 - Getting more bang from your bucks

November 14, 1988
For immediate release

Farm business planning is a creative process
First in a series

Although it may sound simple, farm planning is really the cornerstone of making any farm or ranch operation a success, says an economist with Alberta Agriculture.

"Planning is the foundation for all important farming activities," says Craig Edwards, a farm management economist with the farm business management branch in Olds. "And yet many people don't appreciate what planning can do for them.

"Many farmers are not aware of the study or discipline of farm business management so they don't realize that important principles, tools and methods are available to help them make choices and decisions with the highest probability of success."

The specialist says farm planning primarily involves making choices and decisions: selecting the most profitable alternative from all the alternatives being considered.

"Most farm businesses could benefit from better farm planning. The best way for farmers to learn how to plan is to participate in a course such as Gear Up Financially." Edwards says farmers should check with the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office to register for the course. He says another way to learn planning methods is to study a good farm management text book or even a business text.

A series of articles he has prepared on farm planning is also available and can provide good basic information. Titles include:

1. Production planning procedures 2. Economic principles used in farm planning. 3. Making production decisions, 4. Fertilizer economics. 5. Planning with crop choice worksheets. 6. Operating capital - how to use it. 7. Cost cutting cautions.

(Cont'd)

Farm business planning is a creative process (cont'd)

Planning includes organizing resources with the aim of producing crops and livestock and livestock products that will have the highest probability of maximizing profits, if that is the farmer's goal.

Edwards says planning is the most basic management function as it includes deciding on a course of action and then taking action - doing what was planned. This requires acquiring and organizing the necessary resources, including financing, and human resources to put the plan into operation.

"Using recommended planning tools and methods is a continuous process - not something to do on a stormy day and then forget," says the economist. "The plan itself will be changed as the manager (planner) gets new information from continuous observation and analysis as the plan is implemented.

"The important ingredient is not the 'PLAN', but the planning process - informed thinking and decision making using established economic principles. The planning process provides a systematic and organized procedure that simplifies making choices and decisions."

Even the best planning methods skillfully applied cannot guarantee success, but it certainly improves the probability of achieving success, he says. Planning should be done by all the people affected by the plan, not only the manager.

"On the family farm all the members and employees take part and contribute to planning with benefit to the attitude, behavior and understanding of the group," says Edwards. "This presents an opportunity to learn the planning process from the skills of the leader (manager) for better management in the future. Management skills as well as production skills can be learned from experienced members of the farm family."

(Cont'd)

Farm business planning is a creative process (cont'd)

The specialist says planning is not a dull, stodgy exercise in futility, but an important and lively part of management.

"At its best it requires the highest degree of creativity from the manager and other contributors to the process. Innovative and entrepreneurial skills can contribute by discovery of opportunities which can be included in the alternatives considered for the farm business.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4238

November 14, 1988
For immediate release

Family resource management specialist appointed at Airdrie

A former Alberta Agriculture district home economist has been appointed regional family resource management specialist at the department's regional office in Airdrie.

Effective November 7, Judy Shipley-Smith will provide specialist services to staff in regions 1, 2 and 3 while Pauline Jackson is on a nine-month maternity leave.

JUDY SHIPLEY-SMITH

Shipley-Smith brings to the position over six years experience as a district home economist and a special interest in the area of family resource management. She holds a B.Sc. from the University of Saskatchewan.

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Contact: Judy Shipley-Smith
948-8505

November 14, 1988
For immediate release

New development officer appointed to assist Alberta food processors

Marten Keashly has been appointed development officer with Alberta Agriculture's agri-food and processing development branch. The appointment, which was effective October 1, was announced by Ron Pettitt, manager of the processed food development section.

"Marten will be working with the processed food development section, a key group in the ongoing effort to expand and diversify Alberta's food processing industry," says Pettitt.

Raised in Calgary, Keashly attended the University of Calgary where he graduated in 1978 with a bachelor of commerce degree.

Prior to his appointment, Keashly worked with the department's business analysis branch and the Toronto Dominion Bank where he gained considerable insight into the needs of Alberta food processors.

In his new position, Keashly will be working with a number of companies in the pasta, vegetable, fruit products and specialty food sectors.

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Contact: Marten Keashly
427-7325

November 14, 1988
For immediate release

Alfalfa prices remain strong

Processed alfalfa prices are well above last year's and are expected to remain strong through winter, says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. Beyond that, much will depend on the weather and demand in Alberta's export markets.

"Canadian processed alfalfa production in the 1988-89 crop year is forecast at 534,000 tonnnes, up three per cent from a year earlier," says Al Dooley. "Another good increase in cube production led to the rise in overall output."

Dehy pellet production is estimated at 331,000 tonnes, a 4.3 per cent drop from 1987-88. Dooley says while production in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario will be down due to drought, total production in Alberta is expected to increase enough to almost compensate for the decline.

In his recent situation and outlook Dooley says Alberta's 1988-89 pellet production is expected to account for about 56 per cent of the Canadian total, compared to 46 per cent in 1987-88.

Processed alfalfa exports in 1987-88 at 334,000 tonnes were off about nine per cent from a year earlier. Pellet sales to Japan were weak during the first part of the crop year partly as a result of an earlier build up of stocks in that country.

Dehy alfalfa prospects throughout the winter look favorable.

"Despite the drought on the prairies, Canadian pellet production should be the second highest on record," says Dooley. "Cube production is expected to surpass easily that of a year ago. Together, record production is anticipated for Canada in the current crop year."

Presently, pellet prices are about $30 per tonne higher FOB Vancouver than for the same time a year ago. However, Dooley says the 1989-90 crop year is unlikely to be as good as this one from a price perspective.

For more information on alfalfa contact Al Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5383.

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Contact: Al Dooley
427-5383

AGRI-NEWS

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November 21, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 21, 1988
For immediate release

Higher cattle and lamb prices expected

Producers should see higher prices for both cattle and lambs early in the new year, says an Alberta Agriculture analyst.

In his quarterly livestock situation and outlook, Ron Gietz says expansion of the U.S. beef herd and a reduction in cattle feeding activity will lead to reduced beef output in 1989, pushing cattle prices higher.

As well, he says U.S. and Canadian lamb production for the remainder of 1988 and the first half of 1989 will be close to year-ago production, and the normal seasonal price improvement is expected early in 1989.

According to Gietz, the surge in western slaughter cattle exports to the U.S. is one of the most noteworthy trends in the Canadian beef industry for 1988.

"Exports to the U.S. continued at a rapid pace for the third quarter and a record level of slaughter cattle exports for 1988 is already assured," he says. "In fact, final slaughter cattle exports from Alberta to the U.S. are predicted to exceed 200,000 head."

He says the large volume of cattle exports to the U.S. is directly attributable to the large number of cattle put on feed--in Alberta in particular--over the past year.

The analyst says first quarter 1989 fed steer prices are expected to range from $82 to $86 per cwt, with prices climbing to an $86 to $90 range in the second quarter.

Feeder cattle prices in late 1988 and early 1989 should improve $2 to $5 from early November quotes, with best demand expected for the heavier weight classes.

With regards to the lamb situation, Gietz reports bids for slaughter lambs at Lambco, Innisfail, were 30 per cent below last year's record high third quarter average price range.

The combination of sharply reduced product prices and increased input costs triggered a third quarter payout of $6.83 per head under the lamb program of tripartite stabilization.

Higher cattle and lamb prices expected (cont'd)

"As Lambco has now essentially eliminated its backlog of slaughter lambs, we will be once again entering a situation where the plant may use higher prices to attract more lambs," says Gietz. "As a result, there is potential for modest price improvement late this year, as well as the typical seasonal price improvement in the spring."

Gietz says, overall, prices will average similar to 1988, but without the dramatic swings. Lambco, Innisfail, bids for slaughter lamb may rise from the current $63 to $66 per cwt range to around $70 to $73 by spring.

For more details or a copy of the quarterly livestock situation and outlook contact Ron Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

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November 21, 1988
For immediate release

Canadian swine herd expansion halts

Canadian hog output continued to expand in the third quarter of 1988 as part of the North American trend. However, the July 1 Canadian hog inventory survey and the October 1 Canadian inventory estimate both point to stabilizing hog numbers and an end to the current expansionary phase of the hog cycle.

"This indicates a gradual reduction in volume of hog marketings can be expected during the end of 1988 and early 1989," says Ron Gietz, a market analyst with Alberta Agriculture.

In the U.S., however, hog inventory reports indicate a moderation in herd expansion, but do not give indications of any reduction in hog numbers. It appears that 1989 U.S. pork production will be steady to marginally higher than 1988 production.

The increased Canadian hog output and particularly the increase in live hog exports this past quarter took place mainly in Western Canada. Hog slaughter in the four western provinces increased five per cent to 1,219,365 head, despite a sharp decline in Alberta slaughter.

"Alberta's 11 per cent reduction in third quarter slaughter was due to an ongoing packing plant labor dispute in August and September," says Gietz.

Labor disputes in several other western Canadian hog slaughtering facilities also contributed to the record volume of 203,600 live hog exports to the U.S. Over half of these live exports were from Alberta.

"Seasonally, the highest average slaughter hog prices are usually expected during the third quarter because of lower production and good demand. However, in 1988 the sharp boost in pork production over 1987 resulted in sharp price declines, particularly compared to year-ago prices," he says.

(Cont'd)

Canadian swine herd expansion halts (cont'd)

The average producer payment price for Index 100 dressed hogs was $57.29 per cwt for the third quarter, a 35 per cent price decline from the third quarter of 1987. Gietz says the price slide has continued into the fourth quarter with producer payment prices of under $50 per cwt recorded in late October.

Gietz says over the past quarter, there has been a larger than normal spread between the Alberta market price for Index 100 slaughter hogs and the producer payment price.

"For Alberta producers, the final three months of 1988 will be the worst three-month period, pricewise, since the second quarter of 1980," he says.

He says slaughter hog prices should improve seasonally over the rest of 1988 and into 1989, but substantial price improvement is not likely until the second half of 1989 when U.S. pork production may begin to decline.

Alberta producer payment prices of $1.30 to $1.40 per kilogram ($58 to $64 per cwt) are expected in the first quarter of the new year, assuming an end to current labor disruptions.

The analyst says a more normal grain harvest in 1989 would lead to lower feed costs and a return to profitability. In the interim--the first half of 1989--payouts under the national tripartite program should help producers "weather the storm".

For more details or a copy of the quarterly report, contact Ron Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376

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November 21, 1988
For immediate release

Provincial 4-H judging team chosen

Fifty-five senior 4-H members from across Alberta participated in the Provincial 4-H Multi Species Judging Clinic and Contest November 4 to 6 at Edmonton Northlands.

The top eight individuals, from left to right, are: Cody Bateman, Calgary; Todd Gilmore, Pincher Creek; Carmen Smith, Coaldale; Kari Griffith, Balzac; Janice Davey, Mayerthorpe; Allan Crawford, Irma; Debbie Dick, Westlock; Jason Mcquaig, Sexsmith.

Delegates participated in educational sessions on evaluating sheep, swine, beef cattle, dairy cattle and light horse. Contestants judged and prepared written reasons on the five species plus presented oral reasons on one species to the audience.

These top eight individuals will be representing Alberta at the Canadian Western Agribition 1988 International Judging Seminar November 24 to 26.

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Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

November 21, 1988
For immediate release

4-H leaders attend Western Leaders' Forum

Nine 4-H leaders from across Alberta met with their counterparts from British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba recently to develop their skills and discuss new ideas concerning 4-H. The Western Leaders' Forum, held November 9 to 13 near Gimli, Manitoba also featured the closing ceremonies for the 75th Anniversary of 4-H in Canada celebration.

In honor of this event, two 4-H leader delegates from each of the other provinces were also invited to attend the forum. They took part in sessions dealing with "4-H in the Real World", which focused on 4-H in real-life situations. Topics included dedication, work commitment., "4-H kids--where are they today?" and "4-H in the future--what can we expect?".

The leaders also participated in idea-sharing sessions in which they offered helpful tips on being an effective 4-H leader. The forum closed with an evening banquet and fireworks marking the 75th Anniversary of 4-H in Canada.

The nine leaders from Alberta who attended are:

Grace Scherbinski of Wainwright, a seven-year leader of the Gilt Edge Multi Club.

Dennis Babiuk of Brousseau, a 12-year leader of the Brousseau 4-H Beef Club.

Bonar Hanson of Airdrie, a 10-year leader of the Irricana 4-H Beef Club and the Irricana Country Riders.

Sharon Uhrich of Airdrie, a five-year leader of the Golden Rod Multi-Purpose Club.

Bea Anderson of Beaverlodge, a 10-year leader of the Wembley Beef and Veterinary Science 4-H Club.

Bill McGrath of Vermilion, a nine-year leader of the Preston 4-H Beef Club.

Shirley McGrath of Vermilion, a six-year project leader of the Preston 4-H Beef Club.

(Cont'd)

4-H leaders attend Western Leaders' Forum (cont'd)

Carol Waldorf of Daysland, a nine-year project leader of the Daysland 4-H Community Club and a five-year assistant leader of the Daysland 4-H Beef Club.

Joan Niblock of Grande Prairie, a six-year leader of the Itapaw Light Horse and Grande Prairie 4-H Beef Club.

The program was co-sponsored by the Provincial 4-H Councils in the four western provinces and by a production development assistance initiative grant from Agriculture Canada.

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Contact: Marguerite Stark
948-8509

November 21, 1988
For immediate release

New DA appointed at Hanna

Lorne Cole has been appointed district agriculturist at Alberta Agriculture's Hanna office. He replaces Russell Horvey who has taken a position with the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) program in Edmonton.

The appointment, which was effective September 6, was announced by Glen Werner, regional director at Airdrie.

Cole was raised on a mixed cattle and grain farm near Killdeer, Saskatchewan. He graduated from the University of Alberta in 1985 with a B.Sc. in agriculture, majoring in range management and animal science.

After graduation, Cole was appointed manager of the Pembina Forage Association. In November 1987, he joined Alberta Agriculture as district agriculturist at Athabasca where he worked until his present appointment.

"His background with the Pembina Forage Association, together with his district agriculturist experience, has given Lorne a strong working knowledge of forages, range and beef cattle production," says Werner.

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Contact: Lorne Cole
854-5500

November 21, 1988
For immediate release

Procedures for planning
Second in a series

Running a farm without some kind of planning is like trying to dance in snowshoes.

It lacks style, requires extra work and no one, including yourself, is sure of the next step.

Planning often seems to be one of those abstract terms that falls into that nice-but-not-necessary category, says Craig Edwards a farm business management economist with Alberta Agriculture in Olds.

"But for a farmer, planning is just as vital as knowing how grain grows or how to put pounds on a calf," he says.

"Farm planning involves setting goals and then developing a plan or plans to achieve the goals. Most farmers and members of farm families have a plan of plans of some kind, even though they don't write their plans on paper. If they didn't have a plan of some kind, they wouldn't accomplish much in achieving goals. With a lot of random stop-and-go decisions, the farming operations would be less productive."

Alberta farmers wanting to learn more about farm planning might attend courses such as the Alberta Agriculture program called "Gear Up Financially." Registration information is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Although there are many plans created and existing in farmers' minds, they are far more useful when written on paper, says the specialist who works at the farm business management branch in Olds.

He says when the plan is written out farmers and family, partners and others concerned with the operation have an opportunity to understand and contribute to the planning procedure.

(Cont'd)

Procedures for planning (cont'd)

"A written plan is an outline or sketch of the organization of the available resources and their use in the future," says the economist. "It can be very simple and even skimpy or ideally, it could be detailed enough to include operating costs and returns for each enterprise on the farm. Developed further into a whole farm budget, the resulting plan could be used as a map for the organization and operation of the farm resources, physical and financial."

District agriculturists and regional economists of Alberta Agriculture provide assistance with farm planning and the farm business management branch can provide worksheets with planning procedures.

This material is available by writing to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Alberta Agriculture, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0, or phone 556-4238.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4238

Agri-News Briefs

MEMORIAL LECTURE ON EARLY PIG WEANING

An Irish researcher, Dr. Kelvin McCracken, will present the J.G. O'Donoghue Memorial Lecture at the University of Alberta on November 23. Dr. McCracken has been recognized for his research on the development of digestive function and nutrition/disease interactions in the weaned pig. His lecture topic is "Early Weaning--Challenge to Pig and Producer". He is currently employed with the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture and also is a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science at the Queen's University in Belfast. The lecture will be held at 3 p.m. in Lecture Theatre 1, Humanities Centre at the University of Alberta. Parking is available from 2:30 p.m. in "U" Zone. For more information call Dr. Bruce Young at 432-3233.

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING USE AND PESTICIDE APPLICATION

A recent survey of five U.S. states concluded there is still need for more education on pesticide handling and using protective clothing. Between 87 and 95 per cent of respondents were in the high to very high range in favour of using protective clothing. The majority also said they generally followed recommended practices by wearing long sleeved shirts and jeans or work pants. However, the majority also said they wore leather shoes and baseball caps which aren't recommended. Fewer respondents than expected wore gloves. The Publication Office of Alberta Agriculture has a publication available on protective clothing use. You can get a copy of "Protective Clothing for Pesticide Use", Homedex 1353-90, by writing the office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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AGRI-NEWS

DEC 2 1 1988

November 28, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 28, 1988
For immediate release

Marketing success for Alberta firm in Eastern Europe

An Alberta company has become the first Canadian partner in an agricultural joint venture with the Soviet Union.

Alberta Genetics Inc. of Calgary has formed a joint venture company, named Ross Alta, with the U.S.S.R. Initially Ross Alta has targeted top Holstein genetics--semen, embryos and live cattle--to produce a higher quality of breeding stock through the Soviet Union. In the future, the venture could be expanded to include other dairy and beef breeds.

The joint venture company was one of two agreements the high technology cattle breeding company reached this summer with the Soviets. Beginning in December, Altberta Genetics will also begin shipping dairy cattle embryos to state farms in the Moscow and Crimean regions. Deliveries from Alberta donor cows, and cows from other parts of Canada, will continue in the early spring.

These contracts with the U.S.S.R. were made possible through the marketing support of Alberta Agriculture and the perseverance of the company in pursuing the large Eastern Bloc market, says Doug Hill, Alberta Agriculture's European market development trade director.

The roots of these sales go back to a 1982 Alberta Agriculture market development mission to Eastern Bloc countries, says Hill, when the potential of the area was identified. The joint venture signed this August follows a 1986 protocol for agricultural co-operation between Alberta and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.

Hill also praised the commitment of the company in manpower, finances and services. Their strategy, he says, is a blueprint for other companies to follow. "Sound project development and management, including good prior and post sales service, the ability to negotiate and the delivery of high quality genetically superior frozen embryos has spelled success and placed this Alberta firm in a strong position to continue to do business in the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries," he says.

(Cont'd)

Marketing success in eastern Europe (cont'd)

The sale and joint venture, says Hill, are major access steps into the huge Eastern Bloc market. Spin-offs from the developed goodwill and strong marketing network, are already starting to happen. Currently Red-White Holstein embryos are being shipped to the Slovak region near Bratislava, Czechoslovakia.

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Contact: Doug Hill
427-4241

November 28, 1988
For immediate release

Area co-ordinators named for soil conservation program

Three area co-ordinators have been named to co-ordinate the activities of a major component of the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT).

Russel Horvey, provincial program co-ordinator for CARTT, announced the appointments of John Zylstra, Leslie Wetter and Carol Bettac who will co-ordinate the "Component B" program.

"Under the program, the province will be divided into three areas with each co-ordinator handling activities in their respective territory," says Horvey. "There will be one major applied research project and about 15 on-farm demonstration sites in each area."

Area A will include the south and south-central agriculture regions running from the U.S. border north to the Olds/Three Hills/Hanna districts. Area B will include the north-central, northeast and northwest agriculture regions running from Red Deer north to the Barrhead/Athabasca/Lac La Biche districts and from the Saskatchewan border west to the foothills. Area C will include the Peace River region.

John Zylstra will work out of Fairview to cover Area C. After graduating from Edmonton Christian High School, Zylstra began a bachelor of arts program, majoring in philosophy and English, at Dordt College in Iowa. He completed his BA at the University of Alberta in 1974, then went on to obtain a B.Sc. in agriculture in 1978. After graduation he worked briefly with Agriculture Canada in Grande Prairie, then joined NARP Processors Ltd. in Sexsmith where he worked as a grains co-ordinator and agricultural supplies supervisor for four years. For the past five years, Zylstra was the agricultural fieldman in Spirit River. Together with his wife and five children, Zylstra operates a small mixed farm in the Sexsmith area.

(Cont'd)

Area co-ordinators named for soil conservation program (cont'd)

Carol Bettac will cover Area B based out of Camrose. Raised on a mixed farm near Josephburg, Bettac obtained her B.Sc. in agriculture from the University of Alberta in 1983. While in university she worked as a summer assistant district agriculturist in Lac La Biche. Following graduation, she worked for Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch as an agriculture projects assistant for four months, followed by six months with the horse industry branch. She also spent six months as the agricultural fieldman for the County of Lamont. In 1985, she joined the County of Beaver agricultural service board as agricultural fieldman where she has worked for the past three years.

Leslie Wetter will work out of Airdrie to cover Area A. Born and raised on a mixed farm near Castor, Alberta, Wetter graduated with a BA in history from the University of Alberta in 1971. After graduation he worked for five years on the family farm and in the oil industry. In 1976, he enrolled at Olds College where he obtained a diploma in agricultural engineering technology in 1978. For the next four years, Wetter worked as a service representative for various farm machinery companies in Alberta. In 1982 he returned to the University of Alberta where he graduated with a B.Sc. in agronomy in 1984 and a M.Sc. in soil science in 1987. Wetter was employed with Agriculture Canada as a biologist/agronomist at the Vegreville soil and crop substation until his present appointment.

The co-ordinators' activities will involve several soil, water and cropping conservation demonstrations, systems evaluation, technology transfer and awareness campaigns. They will be working closely with producers, producer groups, provincial and federal departments of agriculture, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA), agricultural service boards, research institutes and educational institutions.

(Cont'd)

Area co-ordinators named for soil conservation program (cont'd)

"In short, they will be working with any groups, agencies, businesses or individuals interested in preserving the productivity of our most valuable resource--soil," says Horvey.

The deadline for project proposals for the spring and summer of 1989 is January 20, 1989. They should be forwarded to: Les Wetter, CARTT Area 'A' Co-ordinator, Bag Service 1, Airdrie, Alberta, T4B 2C1; Carol Bettac, CARTT Area 'B' Co-ordinator, 4909C-48 Street, Camrose, T4V 1L7; or John Zylstra CARTT Area 'C' Co-ordinator, Box 7777, Fairview, T0H 1L0.

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Contact: Russel Horvey
427-4028

Leslie Wetter
948-8511

Carol Bettac
679-1210

John Zylstra
835-2291

November 28, 1988
For immediate release

Computers on Wheels instructor named for northern Alberta

Computers on Wheels Instructors Al Motley (left) and Jim Lougheed (right) gear up for another season on the road.

Bob Forrest, head of the engineering services branch in Edmonton, has announced the appointment of Al Motley as senior Computers on Wheels instructor. Motley will be responsible for delivering Computers on Wheels courses to the province from Red Deer north. He was previously based at the farm business management branch in Olds, delivering Computers on Wheels courses to southern Alberta.

Motley holds a B.Sc. in agriculture from the University of Alberta and a BA in psychology from the University of Saskatchewan. An active member of his family's mixed farming operation in Czar, Alberta, he is especially interested in the application of computer technology to the farm environment.

"Al's farming background and education, combined with his previous Computer on Wheels instruction experience makes him a valuable member of the team," says Forrest.

(Cont'd)

Computers on Wheels instructor named for north (cont'd)

So far, over 100 Computers on Wheels courses have been booked for the 1988-89 season through Alberta Agriculture district offices. The program offers computer courses to farmers across Alberta, ranging from introductory computer literacy to spreadsheets, physical records and computerized bookkeeping.

"The courses are designed to show farm managers how computers can be applied to solving farm management problems in agriculture," says Forrest.

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Contact: Bob Forrest
427-2181

November 28 1988
For immediate release

Computers on Wheels southern instructor named

Wilson Loree, head of the farm business management branch in Olds, has announced the appointment of Jim Lougheed as the Alberta Agriculture Computers on Wheels instructor for the southern half of Alberta. Lougheed replaces Al Motley who moved to Edmonton as the senior Computers on Wheels instructor. Motley will be responsible for Computers on Wheels course delivery in the northern half of the province.

Raised on a mixed farm in central Alberta, Lougheed graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc. in agriculture. He has worked extensively with farm families and their farm records while employed by Alberta Agriculture and the Department of Rural Economy at the University of Alberta.

"Jim Lougheed's combination of expertise and experience in farm records and business makes him a welcome addition to the Computers on Wheels team," says Loree.

He says over 100 Computers on Wheels courses have been booked through Alberta Agriculture district offices for the 1988-89 season.

The Computers on Wheels program offers farm computer courses to farmers across Alberta, ranging from introductory computer literacy to spreadsheets, physical records and computerized bookkeeping. The courses are designed to show farm managers how computers can be applied to solving farm management problems in agriculture.

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Contact: J. Wilson Loree
556-4213

November 28, 1988
For immediate release

Ponoka DA appointed

An Albertan who has spent the past year as district agriculturist in Wetaskiwin has been named district agriculturist in Ponoka.

BRENDA RALSTON

Brenda Ralston was named to fill the vacancy created earlier this year when Brian Cameron went on educational leave. The appointment was announced by Alan Hall, director of the north central region headquartered in Red Deer.

Ralston was born and raised on a mixed cattle and grain farm near Balzac, a community just north of Calgary. She graduated from the University of Alberta in 1986 with a B.Sc. in Agriculture. She began her career with Alberta Agriculture in 1986 working as a livestock production technologist. She has also been an assistant 4-H specialist and a regional soils technician.

Ralston says she is looking forward to meeting the producers in the Ponoka district and serving their needs.

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Contact: Brenda Ralston
783-7073

November 28, 1988
For immediate release

Economic principles used in farm planning
Third in a series

It takes some effort to learn the basics of farm planning, but once you've done it the skill will be useful for the rest of your life, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Understanding and using the principles in farm planning requires study and energy," says Craig Edwards, farm management economist at the farm business management branch of Alberta Agriculture in Olds. "But once learned and applied, the principles benefit farmers by simplifying decision making."

The word principle applies to any generalization that provides a basis for reasoning or a guide for conduct or procedure, he says. In farm management, economic principles guide the decision-making process. They simplify the job of choosing which resources to use in the production process, what products to produce and how much of each to attempt to produce.

The specialist says attending an Alberta Agriculture "Gear Up Financially" course is one of the best ways to learn farm management principles. Program information is available by calling any district office.

Economic principles provide the framework to make informed and reasonable decisions which eventually will maximize the wealth of the decisionmaker. They are applied in all businesses, not only for farming.

Edwards says these business principles are just as real as the principles people live by, the principles of nature, or the principles of mechanics.

(Cont'd)

Economic principles used in farm planning (cont'd)

"Many of us live by the Golden Rule, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you' which is a principle to live by," he says. "We learn to stand upright in our cribs after we adapt to the principles of gravity. Farmers use augers to move grain, using the principles of the screw described by Archimedes more than 2000 years ago. We are surrounded by material goods built on the application of principles of nature, which we learned in school but can't remember now. How many of us can remember the principles of mechanics, heat and thermodynamics, optics, electricity, magnetism, sound and so on?

"Fortunately, there are only a few economic principles used to maximize returns in a business."

The economist says economic principles include diminishing returns, added costs and returns, equimarginal returns, opportunity costs and resource and product substitution.

"A principle is defined as a general or fundamental truth: a comprehensive and fundamental law, doctrine or assumption on which others are based or from which others are derived," he says. "In an era when management decisions are so critical to the success of any operation it is important that these fundamental laws - these economic principles - be understood."

If unable to register for a course, farmers can learn more by studying some written explanations available by phoning or writing Craig Edwards at Box 2000, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0, telephone 556-4248.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

November 28,1988
For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

ANNUAL PROVINCIAL POULTRY AND RABBIT SHOW

The 74th annual provincial poultry and rabbit show featuring the best of conventional and special fowl, as well as a rabbit and cavy show comes to Calgary December 2 through 4. Chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese and pheasants from Alberta and British Columbia breeders highlight the show. More than 300 homing pigeons will also be part of the feather exhibition. The fur exhibition features rabbits and cavies (guinea pigs). For more information contact the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Agricultural Department at 261-0271.

HIVE EQUALS CHICKEN IN OVERWINTERING BEES

Overwintering bees isn't a new idea, but treating the hive as a chicken is a practice a University of Alberta researcher has been experimenting with for the last four years. Dr. Bruce Young used this approach after looking at the hive from the point of view as an animal in a box. Beekeepers have wrapped hives in fiberglass and plastic sheets for insulation or have stacked hives in sheds for the winter. Young says, "It wasn't until we looked at the hive from the point of view of an animal in a box that we realized wrapping it in a plastic sheet is no different from putting an animal in a plastic bag--some may suffocate. And when you put thousands of hives in a shed, what you've got is not a warehouse full of inanimate objects but a barn with thousands of animals needing oxygen and producing gases and heat." Young, a mammalian physiologist and expert on the effects of cold on livestock, advises beekeepers to think of the hive as having a chicken in every box and to use specifications of chicken housing to calculate heating and ventilating requirements. Young's goal is to provide background information to beekeepers so they can put together their own practical overwintering solutions. Young has been collecting data on food requirements, heat production, oxygen consumption, carbon dioxide, waste gas and water

(Cont'd)

OVERWINTERING BEES (cont'd)

vapor production. Overwintering bees has become more important to Alberta producers since Canadian authorities banned U.S. bee imports after a disease outbreak last year. Producers had been using cheap American imports to restart hives, but the ban coupled with more expensive imports from New Zealand, Australia and Hawaii has revived interest in overwintering. For more information contact Dr. Bruce Young at 432-3233 or 432-3232.

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AGRI-NEWS

DEC 2 1 1989

December 5, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

December 5, 1988
For immediate release

CARRT 1989 spring/summer proposal deadline

Time is quickly ticking toward the January 20, 1989 deadline for Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) applications for spring and summer projects.

Two types of projects are eligible for CARTT funding: demonstration, and awareness and technology transfer. Demonstration projects include any conservation farming practices that better protect soil from erosion and or degradation. Awareness and technology transfer projects could include soil conservation meetings, conferences and or tours. All projects must support CARTT's mandate to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology to minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production.

Application forms for both types of projects, as well as questions about project proposals, can be directed to the three area co-ordinators in the province.

Area A includes the south and south-central agriculture regions running from the U.S. border north to the Olds, Three Hills and Hanna districts. Les Wetter is the area A co-ordinator and he can be reached in Airdrie at 948-8511 or Bag Service 1, Airdrie, T4B 2C1.

Carol Bettac is the co-ordinator of area B. North-central, northeast and northwest agricultural regions are in area B, an area from Red Deer north to Barrhead, Athabasca and Lac La Biche districts and from the Saskatchewan border west to the foothills. Bettac can be contacted in Camrose at 679-1210 or 4909C-48 Street, Camrose, T4V 1L7.

The Peace River region is area C and its co-ordinator is John Zylstra. Zylstra is based in Fairview and can be contacted at 835-2291 or Box 7777, Fairview, T0H 1L0.

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CARTT proposal deadlines (cont'd)

Contacts:

Russel Horvey
Provincial Program Co-ordinator
427-4028

Leslie Wetter
948-8511

Carol Bettac
679-1210

John Zylstra
835-2291

December 5, 1988
For immediate release

Alberta 4-H'ers among tops in judging

Three members of the 1987 Alberta 4-H Judging Team were among the top finalists at the Canadian Western Agribition in Regina, November 24 to 26.

The three placed in the top five grand aggregate standings, after competing with teams from across Canada and the northern United States with their knowledge of livestock, judging classes of beef and dairy cattle, lighthorse, sheep and swine and grain classes.

Julie Urano of Taber stood second overall in the grand aggregate standing for grains, while her sister Cindy Urano was in third place. Jason McQuaig of Sexsmith placed fifth in the grand aggregate standings for livestock.

Cindy Urano placed first in oral reasons and third in sheaf making judging. Julie Urano placed second in cereals and oilseeds, third in special crops, second in sheaf making and third in weed identification.

Janice Davey of the Mayerthorpe Beef Club stood fifth in light horses. Carmen Smith ranked third in sheep, while Cody Bateman of Calgary placed fourth.

In the beef judging, Debbie Dick of Westlock placed first and Jason McQuaig placed fifth.

Other members of the Alberta team were Allan Crawford of Irma, Todd Gilmore of Pincher Creek and Kari Griffith of Balzac; they all participated in the livestock judging.

Rounding out the team were Joyce Cyr of Innisfree and Peace regional specialist Janet Kerr of Fairview. Cyr and Kerr coached the team with their presentations.

Contestants were required to provide written reasons for their placements in all five categories and oral reasons for two of those classes.

(Cont'd)

Alberta 4-H members attend Canadian Western Agribition (cont'd)

The Alberta livestock team members were selected at a livestock judging competition during Farm Fair in Edmonton November 4 to 6.

The International Judging Seminar is sponsored by John Deere Ltd., the Canadian Charolais Association, Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Western Agribition.

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Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

December 5, 1988
For immediate release

Making production decisions
Fourth in a series

A review of some economic principles of production and a method to apply them to real decision making on the farm, is provided in a new factsheet from Alberta Agriculture.

The application of nitrogen fertilizer to barley is used as an example to illustrate the basic principles involved, says Craig Edwards, a specialist with the farm business management branch in Olds.

Dr. Leonard Bauer, a professor in the Department of Rural Economy, University of Alberta and author of the article, uses tables and graphs to show expected barley yield in relation to nitrogen fertilizer application, dollar value related to time delays in receiving revenue and consideration of risk and uncertainty.

"Farmers can make good use of this article," says Edwards, a farm management economist. "It explains a simple method to adjust expectations to different conditions of the real world using proven principles of production.

"A fertilizer decision is only one of many decisions farmers have to make each year, but most decisions can be made better and easier by using a process like this."

"Making Production Decisions", Agdex 818-35 is available at Alberta Agriculture district offices or from the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Farmers wanting to participate in a comprehensive farm management course including planning for production should register for the "Gear Up Financially" course from Alberta Agriculture as soon as possible. Call your district office for information and enjoy learning about production and financial planning this winter.

(Cont'd)

Making production decisions (cont'd)

Assistance for planning is available from your district agriculturist or regional farm economist. You can also write to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, T0M 1P0 or phone 556-4248.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

December 5, 1988
For immediate release

CARTT reduced tillage project underway

A sprayer begins application of fall herbicides in a CARTT soil conservation project.

Field operations have been completed for one of the first Canada/Alberta Soil Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) demonstration and awareness projects.

Approximately 60 sites have been treated in a soil conservation project of fall applied herbicides to reduce tillage. The sites include a cross section of Alberta's major soil and climatic zones from Edmonton in the north to Lethbridge in the south.

Trials involved applications of 2,4-D at a rate of 0.5 litres per acre. In the spring, effectiveness of the herbicide can be judged by comparing sprayed and unsprayed sections.

(Cont'd)

CARTT reduced tillage project underway (cont'd)

There are two advantages to the fall herbicide application. John Timmermans, an Alberta Agriculture soil conservation specialist, says 2,4-D is one of the best and most economical alternatives for combating winter annual weeds because the weeds are more vulnerable in the fall than in the spring.

The second advantage is soil protection, especially for fields that are planned as summerfallow in the following year. Fall herbicide application makes for at least one less tillage operation in the spring, and the first cultivation can be delayed by a month or more. Reduced tillage is especially important when crop residue levels are at a minimum following a dry summer, such as 1988 was for much of south, southeastern and east-central Alberta.

CARTT is a jointly funded federal-provincial program. As many as 60 different conservation farming, applied research and demonstration projects will be funded through CARTT's major technology transfer component.

Proposals are currently being accepted for soil conservation projects. The deadline for 1989 spring and summer project proposals is January 20, 1989.

For further information contact: Russel Horvey, CARTT co-ordinator, 427-4028; Carol Bettac, area B co-ordinator in Camrose at 679-1210; Les Wetter, area A co-ordinator in Airdrie at 948-8511; or John Zylstra, area C co-ordinator in Fairview at 835-2291.

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Contact: Russel Horvey
427-4028

December 5, 1988
For immediate release

Elzinga announces expansion of video library system

Agriculture minister Peter Elzinga has announced that due to overwhelming response from the farming community the department's video library system is being tripled in size.

Beginning in early December the number Alberta Agriculture district offices equipped as video resource centres will be increased to 31. The expansion means that about one-half of DA offices across the province will be offering the service.

Mr. Elzinga said, "We launched the video library system as a pilot project in June 1987 with 10 district offices established as video resource centres. Our intent was to make our award winning collection of films and videos as accessible as possible to Alberta farmers. The response has been tremendous."

During the one-year pilot project more than 2,000 video tapes were loaned to farm families through the 10 district offices. Feedback from farmers who used the videos was very positive.

The Minister said, "Farmers responding to evaluations say they found the information presented in the videos useful. About 70 per cent said they applied some of the information from the videos, while nearly 80 per cent said they learned some new information from watching the material. Another 97 per cent said they felt the videos were effective learning tools."

The evaluations showed that 76 per cent of those using the video lending service were full-time farmers and most lived at least 12 miles from the district office.

About 75 per cent of farmers had been farming at least 11 years, and 66 per cent said they visited their district office six to 10 times a year. More than 90 per cent used the video library service from one to five times.

(Cont'd)

Mr. Elzinga said, "The one-year evaluation indicates to us farmers appreciate the service. We hope by equipping more district offices we will help more farmers gain access to production and farm management information."

Each district video library will be equipped with about 40 videos which can be viewed on VCR home video players. Subject material ranges from pasture management and canola production, to dealing with farm stress and financial planning.

In many cases, farmers are able to view the shorter videos right at the DA office, although they are welcome to take the cassettes home for a loan period of one to two weeks.

The videos, which have all been produced by the department's information services division, are designed to deliver practical and relevant information to farm families.

Ranging from short films, five to six minutes in length, to longer productions taking up to about half an hour to view, the videos approach subjects in various ways.

The minister said, "The video library system is just one more way for producers to keep up-to-date with production and farm management trends. The department is using contemporary communications technology to help producers keep current with the latest agricultural technology."

For more information on the video libraries, contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or Information Services, Broadcast Media Branch at 427-2127.

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For further information contact:

Bard Haddrell
Executive Assistant to the
Minister of Agriculture
324 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6
Phone 427-2137

Doug Pettit
Head, Broadcast Media
Information Services Division
Alberta Agriculture
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6
Phone 427-2127

Note: Attached is a list of the video library locations.

ALBERTA AGRICULTURE VIDEO LIBRARY LOCATIONS

Region 1	Brooks Claresholm Lethbridge
Region 2	Hanna Olds Strathmore
Region 3	Camrose Coronation Lacombe Sedgewick Wetaskiwin Stettler
Region 4	Lamont Lac La Biche Lloydminster Ryley St. Paul Wainwright
Region 5	Athabasca Barrhead Drayton Valley Evansburg Fort Saskatchewan Thorhild Westlock
Region 6	Fairview Falher Grande Prairie High Prairie Manning Valleyview

AGRI-NEWS Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch Phone: (403) 427-2121

Coming Agriculture Events

93rd Annual Western Stock Growers' Association Convention
Short Course and Trade Fair
Kananaskis Lodge
Mt. Allen, Alberta.....December 13 - 15, 1988
Jim Davis - 250-9121 - Calgary

Alberta/Canada All Breeds Association
Capri Centre
Red Deer.....December 14 - 15
Drew Mundi - 227-2084 - Innisfail

Dairy Herdsman Assistant Course
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....January 3 - April 21, 1989
Registration deadline - December 15
Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds

Pulse Growers' Association of Alberta Central Meeting
Legion Hall
Camrose, Alberta.....January 5
Craig Shaw - 782-6618 - Lacombe; Ken Kusk - 375-2333 - Kelsey

57th Annual Farm and Home Week
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.....January 9 - 13
Bruce Hobin - (306) 966-5551 - Saskatoon

Unifarm Annual Convention
Edmonton Inn
Edmonton, Alberta.....January 9 - 12
Willow Webb - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Pulse Growers' Association of Alberta Southern Meeting
Elks Hall
Bow Island, Alberta.....January 10
Blair Roth - 381-5125 - Lethbridge

Alberta Horse Breeders and Owners Conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta.....January 14 - 15
Les Burwash - 297-6650 - Calgary; Bob Coleman - 427-8905 - Edmonton

44th Annual Convention Farm Equipment Dealers'
Association of Alberta and British Columbia
Westin Hotel
Calgary, Alberta.....January 19 - 21
William Lipsey - 250-7815 - Calgary

(Cont'd)

Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants
Westin Hotel
Edmonton, Alberta.....January 19 - 21
Martin Daniels - 842-2344 - Wainwright

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association Annual Convenction
and Trade Show
Malborough Inn
Calgary, Alberta.....January 20 - 21
Don Saynor - 250-2509 - Calgary

Rural Education and Development Association (REDA)
Introductory Leadership (Level 1) Workshop
Goldeye Centre
Nordegg, Alberta.....January 23 - 27
Richard Stringham - 451-5959 - Edmonton

Banff Pork Seminar
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff, Alberta.....January 24 - 27
Val Smyth - 432-2406 - Edmonton

Second Annual, Alberta Farm Women's Conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta.....January 25 - 27
Faye Mayberry - 886-4129 - Red Deer

Alberta Canola Growers
Edmonton Inn
Edmonton.....January 25 -27
Pansy Molen - 454-0844 - Edmonton

Pulse Growers' Associaion of Alberta
Capri Centre
Red Deer.....January 30 - 31
Blair Roth - 381-5125 - Lethbridge

Agricultural Service Board Provincial Conference
Palliser Hotel
Calgary, Alberta.....January 30 - February 2
Arthur Christensen - 934-3321 - Strathmore

Canadian Meat Council Annual Meeting
Hotel Vancouver
Vancouver, B.C.....February 1 - 3
Mr. L. Campbell - 416-239-8411 - Toronto

Alberta Beef Symposium
Kananaskis Lodge
Mt. Allen, Alberta.....February 6 - 7
Gordon Mitchell - 291-4880 - Calgary

(Cont'd)

Alberta Dairyman's Association
Malborough Inn
Calgary.....February 6 - 8
Lawrence McKnight - 453-5942 - Edmonton

Rural Education and Development (REDA)
Western Canadian Economic Conference on the Food Industry
Fantasyland Hotel
Edmonton.....February 12 - 13
John Melicher - 451-5959 - Edmonton

Western Fertilizer and Chemical Dealers Association
Palliser Hotel and Round Up Centre
Calgary, Alberta.....February 14 - 17
Dave Wowchuk - (204) 725-4236 - Brandon

CWRA - SWCS Joint Conference
"Wetlands, Wildlife and Agriculture: Achievements and Challenges
Edmonton Inn
Edmonton, Alberta.....February 15 - 17
Lynne Kemper - 422-4232 - Edmonton; Anne Naeth - 432-5338, 432-2771

17th Annual Meeting Prairie Potato Council
Delta
Winnipeg, Manitoba.....February 15 - 17
Dr. Dennis Lidgett - (204)983-3775 - Winnipeg

Sheep Production Course
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....February 20 - 22
Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds

Rural Education and Development Association (REDA)
Intermediate Leadership (Level 2) Workshop
Lake Louise Inn
Lake Louise, Alberta.....February 20 - 24
Richard Stringham - 451-5959 - Edmonton

Rural Education and Development Association (REDA)
Management for Volunteer Executives (Level 3) Workshop
Goldeye Centre
Nordegg, Alberta.....February 20 - 24
John Melicher - 451-5959 - Edmonton

Western Barley Growers Association
Kananaskis Lodge
Mt. Allen, Alberta.....February 22 - 24
Anne Schneider - 291-3630 - Calgary

(Cont'd)

Sheep Shearing Course
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....February 23 - 24
Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds

Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies
Camrose Agri Centre
Camrose, Alberta.....February 23 - 25
Eve Cockle - 427-2174 - Edmonton

Canada Packers Alberta Quilt Competition
Camrose Agri Centre
Camrose, Alberta.....February 24 -25
Eve Cockle - 427-2174 - Edmonton

Poultry Industry Conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer.....February 21 - March 1
Gerry Patsula - 427-5090 - Edmonton

Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit 1989
Kananaskis Lodge
Mt. Allen, Alberta.....March 5 - 8
Gerde Andres - 556-4277 - Olds

89th Annual Calgary Bull Sale
Agricultural Pavillion, Stampede Park
Calgary, Alberta.....March 5 - 8
Don Stewart or Keith Marrington - 261-0266 - Calgary

Alberta Dairy Seminar
Kananaskis Lodge
Mt. Allen, Alberta.....March 14 - 17
Val Smyth - 432- 2406 - U of A - Edmonton

Women of Unifarm Annual Convention
Northhill Inn
Red Deer, Alberta.....March 14 - 16
Willow Webb - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Prairie Barley Production Symposium
Crop Development Centre
University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.....March 21 - 22
B.G. Rossnagel - (306) 966-4976 - Saskatoon

Northlands Western
Agricom
Edmonton.....March 28 - 31
Northlands Agriculture Department - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Coming Agricultural Events

1. Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in April, May, June, 1989 or any events omitted in the attached list? Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the name, city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by February 24, 1988 to:

Print Media Branch
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News. The next edition will be printed March 6, 1988.)

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AGRI-NEWS

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December 12, 1988

For immediate release

This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

December 12, 1988
For immediate release

New Child's Guide to Farm Safety launched

Agriculture minister Peter Elzinga (centre) is joined by Ken Teare (left), vice-president customer and public affairs for TransAlta Utilities Corporation, and Andre Morin (right), vice-president engineering and construction with Alberta Power Limited to officially launch the new edition of "A Child's Guide to Farm Safety".

The 12th annual edition of "A Child's Guide to Farm Safety" has been launched by the Minister of Agriculture Peter Elzinga and two representatives of the guide's new sponsors.

Alberta Power and TransAlta Utilities have teamed up with the agriculture department to sponsor the guide that brings farm safety messages to farm children through their peers.

(Cont'd)

Solomon Kyeremanteng, manager of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program, says the full color guide is more interesting and exciting.

The guide features winning poster and essay entries in the annual Alberta Agriculture farm safety competition. This year's overall contest winner was the poster entry from the grade 4C class from Vermilion Elementary School. The class will receive a plaque for their efforts.

Seven other students from the Vermilion school joined 18 other students and three classes from 15 Alberta schools on the honor roll of winning entries. All of these posters, stories and essays were used to illustrate the safety messages in the 1988-89 edition of the guide.

Each year Alberta students can get involved by designing posters, essays or games around a farm safety theme. As well as being published and being named to the honor roll, the winners are also recognized with certificates.

The guide is an activity book designed around the theme of farm safety and has been incorporated into studies in many Alberta classrooms. Problems and quizzes on a variety of farms safety matters are presented by using the student posters and essays.

About 40,000 copies of the new guide edition will be available to rural students says Kyeremanteng.

The guide is available to Alberta schools on a first come first served basis and can be obtained by making a written request to the farm safety program office in Edmonton.

Following is a list of the students and classes named to the 1988 honor roll:

VERMILION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Kimberly Earle	Grade 3C
Jeremy Payne	Grade 3C
Danny McGrath	Grade 3A
Scott Barr	Grade 4A
Lana Trojan	Grade 4C
Darren Burgoyne	Grade 4C
Karen Welker	Grade 4C
Grade 4C	Overall Poster Winner

(Cont'd)

New Child's Guide to Farm Safety launched (cont'd)

KINGMAN SCHOOL

Erik Tollefson	Grade 3
Brandy Alexander	Grade 3
Carla Bowick	Grade 3

MUNDARE SCHOOL

Rachelle Paquette	Grade 3
Tami Warawa	Grade 3

O.K. COLONY SCHOOL (RAYMOND)

Jerry J. Kleinser	Grade 7
Grades 1-8	Class Poster Entry

KITSCOTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Kyla Gartner	Grade 4A
Ian Christie	Grade 4A

KEHO LAKE COLONY SCHOOL (BARONS)

George Wurz	Grade 5
Rachel Wurz	Grade 8

INNISFREE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Becky Tillotson	Grade 6
Julie Logan	Grade 5

ALLIANCE SCHOOL

Derek Sutter	Grade 4

FALUN SCHOOL

Shelia Roan	Grade 4

THREE HILLS SCHOOL

Machaela Fessler	Grade 5

ALDER FLATS SCHOOL

Josh Werschler	Grade 6

C.J. PEACOCK SCHOOL (CEREAL)

Colin Nichols	Grade 4

BARRHEAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Corey Schuman	Grade 4

TABER CENTRAL SCHOOL

Grade 4	Class Poster Entry

DONALDA COLONY SCHOOL

Grades 1-8	Class Poster Entry

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Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng
427-2186

December 12, 1988
For immediate release

Stubble soil moisture generally poor across province

While there are some wet areas in the province, stubble soil moisture conditions are generally poor in Alberta heading into the winter, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Dick Heywood, a water management specialist with the conservation and development branch in Lethbridge, says in his fall report good soil moisture reserves are located only in the north Peace, a small corner of east central Alberta north of Lloydminster, and east central Alberta in a narrow band running from Athabasca in the north through Vegreville, Viking, and Castor south to Calgary. The rest of the province will have less than normal stubble soil moisture.

Heywood says that less than normal soil moisture might not affect seeding decisions next spring in central and northern Alberta. Winter precipitation could increase the soil moisture levels. Usually 20 to 40 per cent of the moisture from snow and rain between now and seeding will be stored in the soil. In many areas, says Heywood, that storage should be sufficient to provide adequate moisture to make seeding into stubble possible.

In south central and southern Alberta (Brown and Dark Brown soil zones) the soil moisture reserves on stubble at seeding time will likely continue to be low. The low levels make reseeding stubble land riskier than normal, says Heywood.

Although Heywood's report only deals with stubble soil moisture, he indicates that fallow soil moisture in southern and south central Alberta will be also much below normal. In many areas fallow will only have half to one inch more moisture than the stubble.

Information for the fall moisture report was collected in more than 275 fields across the province and from precipitation data from more than 40 stations.

(Cont'd)

Stubble soil moisture generally poor (cont'd)

Next spring, farmers should make every effort to check their own fields for moisture because management and unique local conditions can make significant variations over quite short distances.

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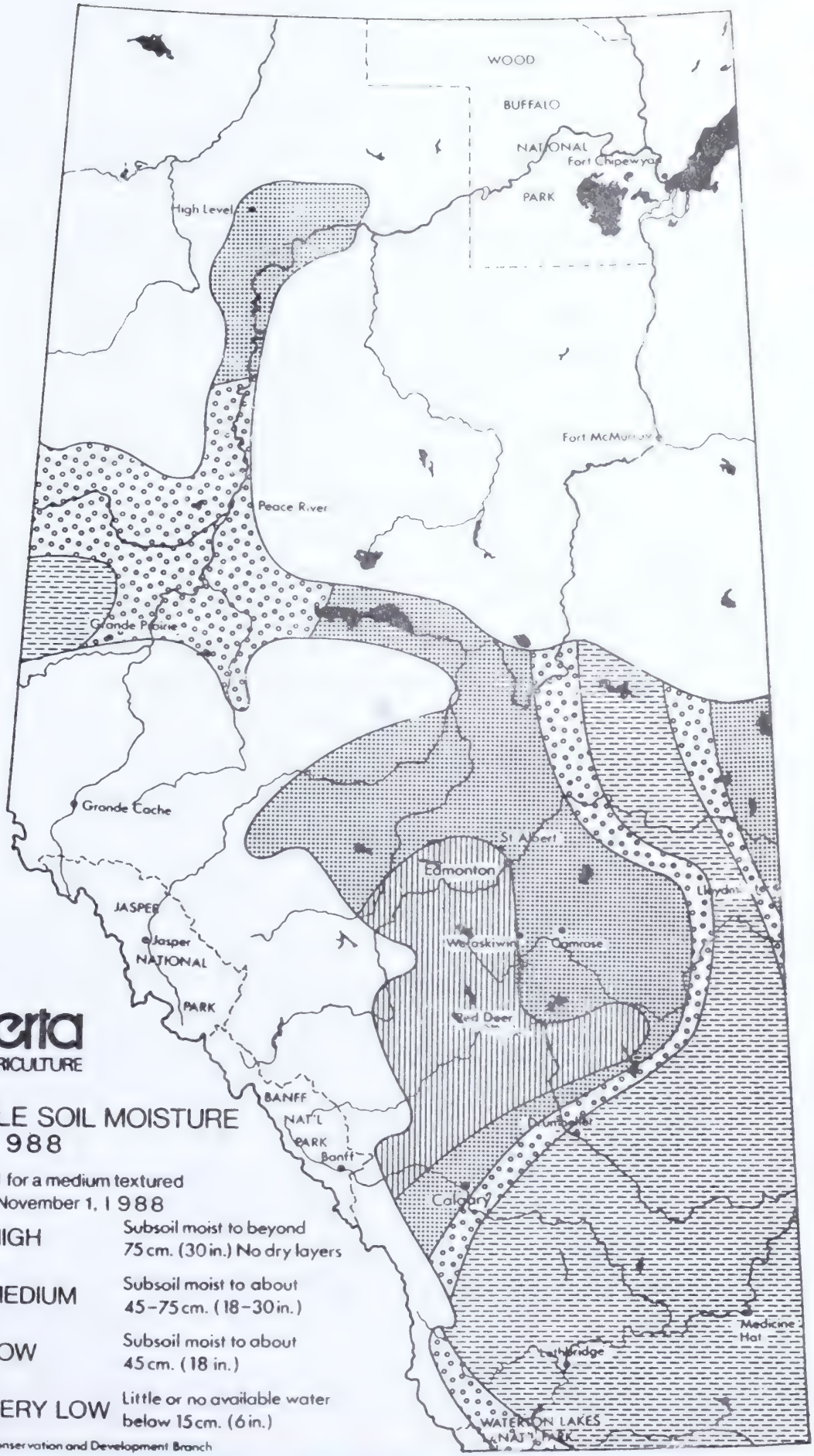
Contact: Dick Heywood
381-5861

Note: Attached is a map of stubble soil moisture



Alberta
AGRICULTURE

STUBBLE SOIL MOISTURE FALL, 1988

Estimated for a medium textured soil as of November 1, 1988

HIGH	Subsoil moist to beyond 75 cm. (30 in.) No dry layers
MEDIUM	Subsoil moist to about 45–75 cm. (18–30 in.)
LOW	Subsoil moist to about 45 cm. (18 in.)
VERY LOW	Little or no available water below 15 cm. (6 in.)

Compiled by Conservation and Development Branch

December 12, 1988
For immediate release

1989 farm calendars available from Alberta Agriculture offices

A compact farm office manager, which serves as a place to keep track of everything from financial records to market prices, is now available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

The pouch style "Save-All Management Planning Calendar" has been a popular item with farm families over the last seven years. It's available free of charge from local Alberta Agriculture district offices.

"We find that people use it for a wide range of purposes," says Anita Lunden, with the department's farm business management branch in Olds. "Results from a recent survey show the calendar is used for a temporary bill and receipt file, for recording appointments and upcoming events, for seeding and harvesting dates, for noting weather conditions and even for birthdays," she says.

The practical and durable calendar shows a list of dates and events to remember, displays the current month with room for notations on each date, notes days elapsed and number of days in the current year and provides a message from a calendar sponsor.

Although produced by Alberta Agriculture, the cost of publishing the calendar is funded by several sponsors. Lunden says the department appreciates the co-operation and support provided by the agencies and companies involved in producing the 1989 edition.

Repeat sponsors include AGT Mobile Communications, Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC), Blackfoot Inn, Cominco Fertilizers Ltd., Cyanamid Canada Inc., Fairview College, Nova Corporation of Alberta, Olds College, TransAlta Utilities, Alberta Power and Alberta Treasury Branches.

Limited quantities of the calendars are available to Alberta farm families on a first come first served basis from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

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Contact: Anita Lunden
556-4240

December 12, 1988
For immediate release

Research agronomist appointed at Lacombe

The newest member of Lacombe's crop research station brings a background of plant breeding and physiology to her position as a research agronomist.

As a member of the field crops branch, Patricia Jedel will research winter hardiness, drought tolerance, crop production and crop rotation of cereal crops. She will also assist plant breeders in developing new varieties to meet the needs of Alberta producers.

PATRICIA JEDEL

Jedel will be working with Dr. James Helm and Dr. Donald Salmon at Alberta Agriculture's crop research station in Lacombe.

Jedel comes to Alberta after working the last two years for Agriculture Canada in Winnipeg where she investigated stem and leaf rust resistance in barley and wheat.

Originally from Austin, Manitoba, she received her B.Sc.A. in 1980 from the University of Manitoba. She earned a M.Sc. in plant breeding with a minor in plant physiology in 1982 from the same university. She is currently completing her Ph.D. thesis with the University of Guelph.

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Contact: Patricia Jedel
782-7152

December 12, 1988
For immediate release

Fertilizer economics
Fifth in a series

Farmers planning to fertilize in the 1989 crop year can improve their decision making skills by studying an Alberta Agriculture factsheet.

The factsheet, Fertilizer Economics, (Agdex 822-11) is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices or from the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

"The publication uses a common sense approach to help interested producers decide how much nitrogen fertilizer to apply," says Craig Edwards, a department specialist in Olds.

Factors considered are expected crop response to nitrogen fertilizer application, expected crop prices, fertilizer cost, availability of operating capital and an assessment of risk.

"The article demonstrates a method of considering many factors to determine the most likely amount of fertilizer to apply to maximize profit, within the limits and conditions considered," says the farm business management branch economist.

Marginal analysis and equal marginal return analysis are demonstrated with a common sense method based on comparing added returns with the added costs of each application.

The comparison enables producers to assess potential gains relative to potential losses and helps them to select a rate of application associated with their ability to and attitude about taking chances on the outcome.

"Producers can use the procedure described in the article to improve the probability of increasing the profitability of their production," says the economist. "Understanding the concepts will assist in developing production plans that make economic sense."

(Cont'd)

Fertilizer economics (cont'd)

Farmers wanting to participate in a comprehensive farm management course including planning for production should register for Alberta Agriculture's "Gear Up Financially" course as soon as possible. Call your district office for information and enjoy learning about production and financial planning this winter.

Assistance for planning is available from your district agriculturist or regional farm economist. You can also write to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, T0M 1P0 or phone 556-4248.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4238

December 12, 1988
For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

$2.9 MILLION PESTICIDE CONTAINER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Stockpiles of pesticide containers will be cleaned up with the advent of a new $2.9 million program funded by Alberta's environment department. Beginning immediately, municipal collection sites will be cleared of containers gathered during the 1987 and 1988 crop years. It's estimated 1.7 million pesticide containers have been stored in 260 municipal sites around Alberta since 1987. The plastic containers will be held in a central storage area after being shredded and bagged. Metal containers will be recycled. All residues collected from the containers will be sent to the Alberta Special Waste Management Treatment Centre near Swan Hills for safe disposal. Existing municipal sites will be monitored by Alberta Environment, and if required be upgraded. The program also will fund research into alternate disposal methods and future container management. This program is one of 13 announced this fall by the environment ministry. Two others that have a direct impact on agriculture are: a program to plant several million trees around irrigation reservoirs in southern Alberta and a 25,000 acre irrigation project on the Blood reserve to control soil erosion and enhance economic opportunities for the band.

FARM FAMILY TYPE AND HANDLING STRESS

A farm family's goals in farming can have an effect on how it faces stress. Determining where families fit in on a continuum between the "yeoman" and the "entrepreneur" can help counsellors deal with families who face stress and possible loss of their farm, says a new American study. For example, the yeoman's family goal is passing the family farm to the next generation, while the entrepreneur's principal goal is making a profit. When faced with losing their farm the yeoman family is more likely to suffer personal stress. For information about the study and article contact July Shipley-Smith, acting regional family resource management specialist in Airdrie at 948-8505.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News briefs (cont'd)

ALBERTA FARM WOMEN'S SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Chinook MLA Shirley McClelland will be one of three panel members discussing "Rural women gaining visibility--what does it take?", during the second annual Alberta farm women's conference convention January 25 to 27 in Red Deer. The panel discussion is one of the many sessions on the theme of "Farm women: the visible link in agriculture" in the Alberta Farm Women's Network sponsored event. The conference closes with the presentation of the Alberta Farm Woman of the Year award. Registrations received prior to December 23 are eligible for an early bird draw. Conference and registration information are available by contacting Faye Mayberry in Red Deer at 886-4129.

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AGRI-NEWS

JAN 18 1989

December 19, 1988

For immediate release

This Week

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It's not too early for crop planning.....14

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

December 19, 1988
For immediate release

Marketing emphasis key to continued Asian trade growth

Alberta must continue vigorous marketing campaigns in order to cash in on the exploding opportunities in Asia says Alberta's Associate Minister of Agriculture.

Shirley Cripps, who led a 15 day mission to China, Japan and South Korea, says her mission was successful in opening doors that can be followed by further trade initiatives.

"Alberta has already established strong friendly ties with these nations. Sister province relationships, exchanges, twinning cities, and post-secondary institutions are evidence of our province's long-term commitment to building trust and friendship. These are key to building trade relationships now and in the future," says the minister.

The minister says the mission made her even more confident about available marketing opportunities and our province's ability to meet those challenges. But she adds, "A major emphasis on marketing is essential, because competition is fierce."

Alberta sold approximately $600 million worth of agricultural products to Japan, South Korea and the People's Republic of China last year, but Cripps says the potential exists for even greater sales. "Consumer tastes and demands are changing in these countries, and the governments appear ready to liberalize many import items. We have those products in Alberta," says Cripps.

"Obviously that means producers, agri-businesses and processors have golden opportunities. We have to co-operatively impress--through marketing--that Alberta has quality products and the ability for long-term reliable delivery. The results will be substantial economic benefits for our agricultural community," she says.

These opportunities underscore the importance of trade missions, says the associate minister, missions like her recent one, and the one in 1987 led by Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga.

(Cont'd)

Also critical to future trade success is the constant contacts made by the department's market development division and by industry organizations and individual businesses, she says.

Japan is already a major market for Alberta products with total sales in that country approximately equal to Alberta sales to the U.S. Both industry and government are excited, says Cripps, about the potential of the beef market. Some predictions are that the beef market alone could double the province's total trade with Japan.

Alberta Agriculture co-hosted major beef product demonstrations in Tokyo and Osaka while the ministerial mission was in Japan. "Alberta beef is a hit in Japan, both as meat and on the hoof," says Cripps. "Alberta's target beef market is not in direct competition with the Japanese product, so our beef industry is anticipating major long-term sales from current orders. Alberta breeders are also delivering genetics and breeding stock."

Alberta products will be on display at 90 food fairs which the Canadian Embassy is co-ordinating with Japanese retailers in 1989. "With Japan as the fastest growing food market in the world," says Cripps, "Alberta food and beverage processors will have to become familiar with the Japanese market and design packaging and products to fit that market."

Japanese interest was also high in animal feed supplies, particularly barley and alfalfa products. The Associate Minister predicts that feed products will soon be an important export product.

Interest in genetic breeding stock is high in the People's Republic of China, Cripps says. The world's most populated nation is also looking for fertilizers, food processing equipment and agricultural equipment. Of particular note, says the Associate Minister, is the Chinese government's interest in joint ventures with the private sector.

"But there are several countries' business people lining up to express their interest, so our presence is essential," Cripps says.

Importing feed grain, swine and cattle genetics and beef are the main areas of opportunity in South Korea, says Cripps. Korea expects to import more feed barley, in particular for hogs. An interesting note is that barley has only been used for human consumption until now.

(Cont'd)

Marketing emphasis key to continued Asian trade growth (cont'd)

Cripps indicates a very strong link with Korea is through the academic community, "Through University of Alberta involvement with experimental livestock projects and the twinning of Olds College with Yonam College, we are building bridges for the future."

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Contact: Doris Armitage
Executive Assistant
to the Associate
Minister of Agriculture
319 Legislature
Edmonton
422-9156

David Wong
Senior Trade Director
Market Development
Alberta Agriculture
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton
427-4241

December 19, 1988
For immediate release

Drought assistance program deadline December 31

December 31 is the deadline for farmers looking for assistance through the agriculture department elements of the Alberta Water Supplies Assistance program.

If a producer is contemplating constructing or rehabilitating a dugout, pumping a dugout, or hauling water, then now is the time to get an application in to an Alberta Agriculture district or regional office, says Bob Forrest, head of Alberta Agriculture's engineering services branch. Applications must be in by then for the project to be considered for assistance he says. He adds that the deadline has not been extended and still remains December 31, 1988.

"Demand for assistance has been overwhelming throughout the year. Application numbers have been high across the entire province," he says. Olson says the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) estimates that there have been as many dugouts constructed this year as were constructed during the past eight years combined. With the mild fall and winter weather contractors have remained busy even into December, he says.

Alberta Agriculture's components of the Alberta Water Supplies Assistance program include rehabilitation and construction of dugouts and other stock watering facilities, farm dugout pumping and water hauling.

The Alberta Water Supplies Assistance program, announced by Premier Getty this spring, was retroactive to January 1, 1988. Besides Alberta Agriculture, three other departments are part of the total program. Alberta Environment provides assistance to individuals and communities to drill water wells. Alberta Transportation and Utilities offers assistance to build long-term water conveyance systems and Alberta Forestry Lands and Wildlife provides assistance to develop wells and other water resources on grazing reserves. Programs offered by these departments continue into 1989.

(Cont'd)

Drought assistance program deadline December 31 (cont'd)

Applications and other information have been available for all of the Alberta Water Supplies Assistance program elements since early May. For more information contact any Alberta Agriculture district or regional office.

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Contact: Bob Forrest
427-2181

December 19, 1988
For immediate release

Mustard seeds can be poisonous

Combined pressures of economic and climatic conditions have forced some producers to feed grain contaminated with weed seeds that can be toxic to cattle says an Alberta Agriculture toxicologist.

Dr. Roy Smith, chief chemist with the toxicology laboratory, says particular caution should be used when feeding seeds of the mustard family and seeds related to the mustard family. "Mustard seeds contain substances which are not themselves poisonous, however, when the seeds are crushed and moistened a class of substances known as isothiocyanates, or mustard oils, are released.

"Different kinds of mustards produce different mustard oils and these vary somewhat in toxicity. The worst offenders are stinkweed, wild mustard and wormseed mustard all of which will liberate the same highly toxic compound allylisothiocyanate," he says.

Human consumption of mustard is voluntarily limited by the pungent taste of the isothiocyanates. The compound has already been formed in table mustards, either in table-ready mustards or when water is added to ground seeds. The situation is different for cattle encountering mustard seeds in their feed.

"Unground dry mustard seeds that would be in cattle feed do not have a pungent taste and will happily be eaten to excess by cattle, only to form the mustard oils after they have been eaten," says Dr. Smith.

Cattle that eat dangerous levels of mustard seeds will show signs of indigestion and distress within hours of feeding, he says. In extreme cases death will occur. Rations with lesser amounts of dangerous mustard may give rise to bloody diarrhea and rations with even less mustard may eventually lead to blood in the urine, he adds.

"Because in extreme cases producers are getting screenings consisting entirely of weed seeds and are feeding them to their animals, they have to be aware of potential problems," he says.

(Cont'd)

Mustard seeds can be poisonous (cont'd)

A variety of other weed seeds also pose potential difficulties. "If producers feel they must feed weed-contaminated rations, then they must be alert to signs of problems," he says.

The toxicology laboratory is able to analyse for the toxins produced by commonly encountered weeds. Producers can have an analysis of their feed done. However, Dr. Smith cautions that at the first signs of trouble to discontinue feeding and to consult a veterinarian.

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Contact: Dr. Roy Smith
427-3981

December 19, 1988
For immediate release

Keeping the fun in showing horses

Everyone has probably witnessed the scene of a vocal or critical parent ruining what should be a fun sporting experience for their youngster. With their yells they often frustrate, sometimes turn off and always disappoint their child.

Dr. Anne Friemel will tell North America's premiere educational program dedicated to the horse and its owner, the Horse Breeders and Owners Conference, how far young people can be pushed in competition. The conference will be held January 14 and 15 in Red Deer.

DR. ANNE FRIEMEL

Friemel is a licensed professional counsellor from Amarillo, Texas who works with abused children that have been removed from their homes. She also helps their parents find new ways to raise their children so they can return home.

As a 4-H leader and horsemanship instructor, Friemel uses her professional training to teach children to ride and enjoy their experience and to get maximum commitment from the children who want to be competitive.

Actively involved in riding and showing horses with her own family, Dr. Friemel has had ample opportunity to observe pressures put on young people to excel in competition. Children basically want to please their parents, she says, and want their parents to be proud of them. This means parents need to be careful how things are said. "I just cringe when I hear a parent call his child a name like dumb or stupid. A hard and fast rule is you do not name call," Friemel says.

(Cont'd)

Instruction needs to be given in positive terms, rather than as a negative reinforcement. Friemel says to tell the child what he or she has done right and then suggest what could make their performance better. Or, parents can ask what was done wrong because many times the child will know. Communicating that can be a learning experience for the child, but screaming at the child is both demoralizing and embarrassing, she says.

Competition isn't bad, she says, because children do need the challenge of setting goals and trying to reach them. Stress and pressure can be motivational, but the child has to want that experience from their riding and has to be mature enough to deal with what it entails.

Dr. Friemel is one of 15 internationally recognized speakers who will be taking part at the Horse Breeders and Owners Conference. For more information about the conference, contact the Alberta Agriculture horse industry branch, 205, 2003 McKnight Blvd., N.E., Calgary, T2E 6L2 or call 297-6650.

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Contact: Les Burwash
297-6650

December 19, 1988
For immediate release

Coming back to the future

Farm couples will be taken into the future to look at the trends and issues that will have an impact on their farms and families during Alberta Agriculture's Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit conference.

The conference draws its participants from across Alberta as well as the other western provinces. It's expected that many couples who attended previous conferences will be returning for the 1989 event at the Kananaskis Lodge from March 5 to 8.

"The success of the conference in the past has been due to a balance between technical and production topics, and those that deal with the human side of farming." says conference organizer Gerd Andres. "To keep that balance, this year's conference will include sessions ranging from marriage enrichment and enpowerment to labor relations and passing on the farm.

"To make the conference sessions meaningful to Alberta farm families, we are bringing in several speakers already well known in Western Canada," adds Andres.

Two of the highlight topics will be biotechnology and the weather. Dr. Bob Church will be speaking on biotechnology in the livestock industry. Church, recently elected as president of the Calgary Stampede Board, is facing his own challenge--taking the Stampede into the future. Church is known for his research at the University of Calgary and is in demand internationally as a speaker on biotechnology.

The impact of biotechnology on the plant industry will be the topic area for another Calgarian, Gordon Wells of Biotechnica Canada.

"In the past, weather has always been a topic of interest to farmers," says Andres, "but it has now become front page news. Because of the strong interest, there will be two weather-related sessions at the '89 conference."

(Cont'd)

Coming back to the future (cont'd)

Dr. Tim Ball, a weather historian from the University of Winnipeg will talk about historic weather patterns, the greenhouse effect and the implications for future water policies.

Art Douglas, from Creighton University in Omaha, will give his weather predictions for the spring and summer. Many past participants wanted Douglas back this year because of his accurate predictions at last year's conference, says Andres.

Registration forms for the conference will be available in mid-December from district extension offices and the farm business management branch.

For more information on Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit '89 contact Gerd Andres or Trish Stiles at the Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0 or phone 556-4240.

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Contact: Gerd Andres
556-4240

Trish Stiles
556-4240

December 19, 1988
For immediate release

New staff members at Brooks research centre

The Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks has recently welcomed three new staff members.

Cathy Krause, Judy Butt and Hannah Mathers were appointed to the horticulture section of the center. Their appointments were announced by horticulture section head Clive Schaupmeyer.

CATHY KRAUSE

Krause's position as vegetable extension agrologist has three primary responsibilities. She provides extension services to southern Alberta market gardeners and the potato industry, is involved with the vegetable research program at the centre, and will conduct potato cultivar trials in co-operation with the potato industry.

Krause, who calls Regina her hometown, graduated in 1980 with a B.Sc. in agriculture from the University of Saskatchewan. To complement her academic training she took Olds College's production horticulture diploma program, graduating in 1983.

During the past five years Krause has worked in various casual technical positions with Alberta Agriculture.

JUDY BUTT

As research horticulturist Judy Butt will manage flower and vegetable greenhouse research programs and provide extension services to commercial greenhouse operators in southern Alberta.

(Cont'd)

New staff at Brooks research centre (cont'd)

HANNAH MATHERS

Butt comes to Alberta from Ontario where most recently she taught at the Niagara Parks Commission School of Horticulture in Niagara Falls. She is a member of the Canadian Society of Horticultural Science, American Society of Horticultural Science and Bedding Plants Incorporated.

A native of St. John's, Newfoundland, Butt graduated from the University of Guelph's horticulture department in 1982 with a B.Sc. She followed with a M.Sc. at the same university and stayed on at Guelph as a research associate working on post-harvest physiology of roses.

Hannah Mathers is the nursery crops research horticulturalist with the dual responsibility of managing the applied nursery crop research program and to providing technical information and advice to growers, commodity organizations and others involved in the ornamental industry.

Born and raised in Exter, Ontario, Mathers worked as a forestry technician for four years after graduating from the diploma course at Sir Sanford Fleming College in Lindsay, Ontario. She received an associate agriculture diploma from University of Guelph in 1980 and then a B.Sc. from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York in 1986. She did postgraduate work at the University of Saskatchewan graduating with a M.Sc. in 1988.

Contact: Cathy Krause
362-3391

Judy Butt
362-3391

Hannah Mathers
362-3391

December 19, 1988
For immediate release

It's not too early for crop planning

Sixth in a series

While the work may change seasonally, farm business planning should continue year round with winter being a good time for farm decision makers to concentrate on planning, says an Alberta Agriculture farm management specialist.

Farmers wanting to participate in a comprehensive farm management course including planning for production should register for Alberta Agriculture's "Gear up Financially" course as soon as possible. Information about the course is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

The course is an enjoyable way to learn about production and financial planning this winter, says Craig Edwards, a farm business planning expert.

For farmers not able to attend the course but who are interested in business planning, sometimes it's difficult to know where to start. Edwards suggests they begin by considering their crop choices.

"Making a separate budget for each crop showing variations such as different levels of fertilizer application, seeding rate and weed chemicals provides a good start for estimating yields, prices and costs," he says.

Edwards, a farm management economist with the farm business management branch in Olds, says using a crop choice worksheet, like one recently published by Alberta Agriculture, is helpful.

"Planning activities and developing written plans is time well spent," says Edwards. "Farmers should make several copies of the worksheet before using it, so they can use several sheets for every crop they consider growing.

(Cont'd)

It's not too early for crop planning (cont'd)

"Use separate sheets to show a high level of inputs, a medium level and a low level. They can be used to compare expected returns (yield times price) over expected variable costs for each crop. Comparing different levels of intensity of production after calculating expected yields and prices for each level will help in the decision of how much to attempt to grow, how to grow the crop and what to grow."

The worksheets are designed for farmers to use their own estimates of expected revenues and input costs per crop. The sheets give no typical costs but provide a format as a reminder of all the costs that might be included in the estimates.

"The factsheet also provides explanations for using the worksheets to advantage in crop planning," says the economist. "The worksheets, when completed for each crop, provide the basic cost calculations required to make decisions. When the decisions are made, the cost calculations can be summarized for the following year including a projected cash flow."

The factsheet, "Planning With Crop Choice Worksheets", (Agdex 815-2), is available from any Alberta Agriculture district office or from the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6.

Assistance for planning is available from your district agriculturist or regional farm economist. You can also write to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, T0M 1P0 or phone 556-4248.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

AGRI-NEWS

December 26, 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

December 26, 1988
For immediate release

Elzinga says commitment to agriculture maintained

The past year has been another rollercoaster ride for Alberta farmers, but the provincial government has been on hand to smooth out some of the bumps says Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga.

"Every year in agriculture there is a different set of circumstances to cope with. Our commitment remains the same, a three pronged plan to provide a stable atmosphere for agriculture producers. That strategy is key to producers being able to manage their own destinies," says Elzinga.

"It may seem like I'm a broken record always repeating this, but I believe the three thrusts of our government's approach to agriculture policy is a fundamental plan that's working. First, we have programs to reduce farm input costs. Second, we provide a safety net of insurance and stabilization programs to maintain farm income. Third, is our all out effort to build a more competitive and diversified agricultural industry."

Speaking in a year end interview, the minister says the results of these policies and that commitment are very evident, but that government, industry and individual producers still have to work together to fulfil our goals.

"As I alluded to earlier, agriculture always has some complication thrown at it and often it has something to do with the weather. In 1988 it was drought. Forecasts of widespread drought followed record low snow packs and we mobilized early to develop a comprehensive package of help for those producers who would need it. Fortunately rain did come in some areas, and that rain did more good than could any government program," he says.

Drought did persist, especially in the south, and in small pockets elsewhere. Participation in the Government of Alberta's Water Supplies Assistance program was consistent from its first day in all areas of the province.

(Cont'd)

Originally announced as a $20 million program by the Premier in April, the program has elements administered by four different departments. The program was enriched, and total funding now exceeds $23 million. Alberta Agriculture's programs for constructing or rehabilitating a dugout, pumping or hauling water to fill dugout all have a December 31, 1988 deadline.

"The overwhelming response certainly indicated the need for the program. By building or fixing up existing dugouts, farmers were preparing themselves for the future," says the Minister.

The Water Supplies Assistance program was supplemented by a joint federal-provinical Livestock Drought Assistance program. First payments from the program went out to producers in October. For producers faced with possible herd reduction and loss of breeding stock, the program provides up to $60 per head for cattle, horses and bison and up to $12 per head for sheep and goats.

INPUT REDUCTION PROGRAMS CONTINUE

A significant part of the provincial agriculture budget goes toward reducing input costs. This budget year the price tag for those items--fuel, fertilizer, credit and natural gas--is over $133 million. That represents about one quarter of total agriculture spending in Alberta.

"Sometimes we hear in the agricultural community that the half billion dollars we spend on agriculture isn't enough, and from urban Alberta we get questions about why agriculture gets so much support. The crux is this: agriculture is a pillar of our economy and it gets buffeted by forces beyond our control. We need agriculture. One in three jobs in our province has some link to the industry, so we must maintain and strengthen it," says Elzinga.

The government has also been firm on its stand of how the Crow Benefit is paid. "We would rather producers be paid directly instead of the payment going to the railways. That method is a distortion of feed grain prices and limits our ability to diversify," he says.

(Cont'd)

Elzinga says commitment to agriculture maintained (cont'd)

The Alberta government has repeatedly lobbied the federal government on the issue; that lobbying included the work of a special task force on the issue. To protect producers two programs to offset the distortion were put in place, the Feed Grain Market Adjustment program, and its successor the Crow Benefit Offset program.

Recently Premier Getty and Elzinga made a joint announcement that the offset program would continue through March 31, 1990. The program pays farmers $13 for every tonne of feed grain used in the province. "We've helped over 26,000 producers and turned around the livestock feeding industry through the two programs," says the Minister.

STABILITY AND AGRICULTURAL CREDIT

Many producers are still struggling with farm debt loads incurred early in the decade when interest rates skyrocketed. Young farmers setting up their businesses face enormous capital costs. Both factors make agricultural credit an important one in the province, says Elzinga.

"When the Farm Credit Stability program got up and running in August of 1986 the July 31, 1989 deadline looked a long way off. Now there are only months left for producers to take advantage of the long-term fixed rate loan program.

"I can honestly say I am very pleased with the success of this program. It's a promise made and delivered on. A program that's been appreciated and used by thousands of farm families and partnerships. We estimated it's saved more than $40 million in interest payments since its introduction.

"The changes that were made to the program this July have given farmers more flexibility, especially in refinancing operating debt. There is still about $400 million available to loan. I really encourage farm families to take advantage of the program before it ends," he says.

When talking about agricultural credit in this province eventually talk turns to the Alberta Agriculture Development Corporation (ADC) In 1988 the government reconfirmed ADC's lending mandate.

(Cont'd)

Elzinga says commitment to agriculture maintained (cont'd)

Existing financial counselling programs of Alberta Agriculture and ADC were amalgamated into the Farm Financial Advisory Service. A new emphasis was placed on efficient and effective program delivery. ADC also became more flexible with beginning farmer loans.

"Our young farmers are critical to the industry's health. It's a tough business to start because of the capital outlay required. We want to be sure that opportunities exists for young farmers to start, and continue to be in the business of farming. They are our future, and they need viable options.

One of those options is the indexed deferral plan for ADC borrowers. The plan is designed to improve cash flow when commodity prices are low, so the borrower pays back less when prices are low.

Protection from low prices is also the aim of national tripartite programs. Producers and federal and provincial government all pay into the program. Lower than average prices trigger payments to the producer.

The Minister says he is pleased with participation by producers in the red meat and sugar beet programs. He adds that there will soon be a national tripartite program for honey.

BEYOND OUR BORDERS

By its very nature agriculture doesn't happen in a vacuum. That's both part of its strength and vulnerability. Weather plays havoc, and so does the international marketplace.

"Despite the disappointment of the Montreal meeting, I'm still hopeful General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations will lessen the subsidy war and grain prices will rebound," says Elzinga.

"Frustrating is the only word to describe the things that are out of our control. But you can't let the frustration beat you, either as the Minister of Agriculture or as a farmer.

(Cont'd)

Elzinga says commitment to agriculture maintained (cont'd)

"Our lobbying and negotiating efforts on behalf of our producers haven't stopped, and won't because the outcome is just too important--whether the issue is international subsidies or the method of payment."

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Contact: Bard Haddrell
Executive Assistant to the
Minister of Agriculture
324 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6
Phone 427-2137

Editor's Note: This is the first of two articles from an interview with the Minister.

December 26, 1988
For immediate release

Exceptional yields, quality, but honey prices still down

While drought hindered grain crops across the Prairies in 1988, honey producers had close to ideal conditions and harvested an excellent crop.

But the news wasn't all good for honey producers as the hoped for market recovery didn't materialize. Prices remain depressed as North American production was better than anticipated, and with a relatively large Canadian honey carryover from 1987, says Al Dooley.

Dooley, a special commodities analyst with Alberta Agriculture, says the combination of high stock levels at the beginning of the year and at least average production will make it very difficult for prices to advance to even the mid 40 cents per pound range in the current crop year.

Canadian honey carryover into the 1988 crop year was about 12 million kilograms, or about 30 per cent of one year's production. The 1988 national production total is estimated at almost 37 million kilograms. That total is down seven per cent from 1987, but is one per cent above the 1982-86 average. Alberta's production is 28 per cent of the Canadian total.

Dooley says conditions in Alberta resulted in exceptional yields and quality, especially in the Peace River region. Yields in Alberta averaged 69 kilograms per colony, the highest level since 1984. In the Peace River region yields were estimated at 95 kilograms per colony, 64 per cent above the Canadian average and significantly higher than the provincial average. The Peace region accounted for 4.4 million kilograms of the province's 10.3 million kilogram total.

"Internationally, stock levels have been declining and a crop failure in one of the major producing countries could turn the market around quickly.

"Canadian exporters have also become less reliant on the American market as an outlet for honey, which is another positive development for the industry," says Dooley.

(Cont'd)

Exceptional yield, quality but honey prices still down (cont'd)

Alberta had an estimated 1,140 registered beekeepers and 190,000 registered colonies in 1988. About 150,000 to 160,000 of those colonies were operated strictly for honey production.

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Contact: Al Dooley
427-5383

December 26, 1988
For immediate release

Tax deferral plan for drought reduced herd sales

Alberta farmers forced to sell part of their herd because of drought conditions could benefit from a drafted legislation amending federal income tax law says an Alberta Agriculture farm management economist.

Federal finance minister Michael Wilson unveiled draft legislation for the tax deferral program in mid-December. He first announced the program in June.

Merle Good, with the farm business management branch in Olds, says the announced amendments will permit farmers to deduct a portion of the income they receive from selling breeding animals in a drought year. That amount would then be included in their incomes for the following year.

Good says the tax deferral would be available at differing rates depending on how much breeding stock a farmer sells between the first and last day of the year. Deferrals start once a herd has been reduced by 15 per cent.

"If a farmer sells 15 to less than 30 per cent of his breeding stock, then 30 per cent of sale proceeds may be deferred. When a herd is decreased by 30 per cent or more, 90 per cent of sale proceeds may be deferred," says Good. However, he cautions, if a farmer purchases breeding stock during the year then the deferral applies only to the difference between income from the sales and the stock purchase price.

The draft legislation defines a breeding animal as over 12 months of age and includes cattle, bison, goats, sheep and horses. Horses are only those kept for breeding in the commercial production of pregnant mare urine.

"This example scenario illustrates how the tax deferral would work. Say a farmer starts on January 1 with 80 cows and 40 bred heifers that meet the over 12 month age requirement. On December 31 the farmer has reduced his herd to 50 cows and 25 bred heifers. This is a reduction of 37.5 per cent, so he would be eligible to defer 90 per cent of what he was paid for the 45 cattle he sold.

(Cont'd)

Tax deferral plan for drought reduced herd sales(cont'd)

"Now if he sold the cows for $800 a head and the heifers at $1,000 each the total sale proceeds would be $47,000. At a deferral of 90 per cent, the total income deferred would be $42,300.

"However, if the farmer bought 10 cows at $1,000 each during the course of the year, the cost of those cattle would be deducted from the sale proceeds. Using the same example, his net eligible income would be $37,000 instead of $47,000. By working through the formula the farmer would then be able to deduct, if his chose to, $33,330 from his farm income. This total would then be used in computing his farm income in the next year," Good says.

Good says Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have all been designated as drought regions in 1988. "That means farmers in all three prairie provinces could qualify for the program if the legislation becomes law," he says.

Another program detail of note is that the Minister of Agriculture can extend the deferral to the next tax year if a specific area continues to suffer from drought.

Farmers should also be aware of three other pertinent program details, says Good. As the program is only a deferral of income, there is no requirement to repurchase breeding stock in the next taxation year. Nor does there appear to be any limitation on sales of breeding animals to "non-arms length parties". "In other words, a sale of breeding animals between parents and children would appear to be eligible," he says. Finally, if the taxpayer dies or no longer lives in Canada, then the deferral is not available.

The draft legislation is quite complex, says Good, and it's important that farmers seek advice from a qualified accountant to determine net eligible sales, deferral percentage and deferral eligibility.

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Contact: Merle Good
556-4237

December 26, 1988
For immediate release

Effective methods of seeding rehabilitated canal banks

One year later the results are mixed in an Alberta Agriculture irrigation branch test of reseeding rehabilitated canal banks.

During the summer and fall of 1987 three seeding methods and several seed varieties were used at a site in the Raymond Irrigation District near Welling. Broadcast seeding, hydroseeding and the installation of grass mats were the test methods. Seed mixtures included Kentucky blue grass, Fairway crested wheatgrass, creeping red fescue, streambank wheatgrass and annual rye grass in varying combinations.

Technologist Dave Cholka says seedbed preparation included removing weeds and loosening soil with hand rakes. Except for an initial soaking of grass mats, no water was applied to any seeded site in order to have natural climatic conditions. Seeding was done in early July and late October.

Now, a year later, results have been very positive for the July seeded sites but were very poor for the fall-seeded sites says engineer Svat Jonas. "Of the July-seeded sites, the fertilized hydroseed had the best catch and the most mature stand. The Fairway crested wheatgrass was the most common plant species established from the five varieties seeded," he says.

Only the grass mat showed any sign of growth in the fall seeded sites, says Jonas. He says the summer-seeded grass was probably more successful because of good rainfall immediately after seeding. "Precipitation in the first month following the summer seeding was equal to that of the eight months after the fall-seeding," he says. "Seeding time is more related to precipitation than to season, the only advantage fall seeding would appear to have is the cooler growing conditions."

Hydroseeding with fertilizer was the most effective method of getting a quick regrowth of grass on a canal bank, he says. However, he adds, for economic reasons broadcast seeding will probably continue as the most widely used method.

(Cont'd)

Jonas says all three seeding methods would greatly benefit from a more nutrient rich and organic seed bed.

There are six things to consider in reclaiming a canal bank, he says. Each of these parameters will contribute to whether a site can be successfully reclaimed. These parameters include: soil or seedbed properties including texture and available nutrients (topsoil is essential); local groundwater conditions; expected climatic precipitation; ease of propogataion; resistance to disease and winterkill; and, cost of seed and method of application.

Jonas says producers should examine and evaluate each of these before starting a large scale grass seeding reclamation project.

Technologist Dave Cholka counts and classifies plants in a 0.25 square metre area.

Contact: Dave Cholka
381-5877

Svat Jonas
381-5870

December 26, 1988
For immediate release

Reform taxing for horse industry

If you are in the business of horses, you will be doing your taxes differently next year than you have been in the past says a Calgary accountant.

Judy Lloyd, a certified management accountant who specializes in farm accounting, will be telling the Horse Breeders and Owners Conference how tax reforms will influence the horse industry. The conference, a top notch educational program for the horse enthusiast, is January 14 and 15 in Red Deer.

JUDY LLOYD

Lloyd, a former district home economist with Alberta Agriculture, says Bill C-139 changes farm income tax calculations effective January 1, 1989. For those engaged in the horse industry there are some major changes.

All horses have become designated animals for tax accounting and must form part of inventory. Designated animals, says Lloyd, are no longer allowed as a deductible expense but become capital purchases which are depreciated at a 30 per cent per year rate. When a designated animal is sold, the proceeds are included in income, and the undepreciated cost is recorded as an expense. Lloyd will also look at areas such as restricted farm losses, expense restrictions and capital gains.

Fifteen internationally recognized speakers from the horse industry, research and business community will be featured in the conference program. For registration information, contact Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch at 297-6650 in Calgary or 427-8905 in Edmonton.

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Contact: Les Burwash
297-6650

December 26, 1988
For immediate release

Choice and cooking key to quality pork

If you are planning to serve pork while entertaining over the holidays Alberta Agriculture's provincial food nutrition specialist has some tips for choosing and preparing pork.

Aileen Whitmore says there is a simple formula to equal delicious eating: choose quality and add proper preparation.

Top quality pork is firm and fine grained. Color, she says, is also an important indication when buying pork. "A normal light pink color is most desirable. The outer fat covering should be firm and white. The amount of bone in relation to meat is small. Bones are porous and slightly pink in color," she says.

The tenderness of pork roasts and chops is a major source of appeal to pork lovers, she says. Because animals are young when processed, pork is naturally tender. A key to determining that tenderness is the texture or surface appearance of the meat. "The coarser the texture, the less tender the meat," Whitmore says.

Like all meats, fresh pork must be properly handled to maintain quality. Fresh, cooked and cured pork should be stored in a refrigerator at 4°C as soon as possible after purchase.

When cooking pork, the rule is "low and slow" to ensure its tenderness and the best in eating quality. Whitmore says low doesn't mean any lower than 275°F (140°C). Excess cooking will dry the meat out, making it tough. However, if you cook it so that there is just a tinge of pink or when the meat thermometer registers 80-85°C, the meat will be juicy and full of flavor, she says.

Freezing preserves flavor, color and nutritive value of pork. For best results Whitmore says frozen fresh pork should be used within three to six months. Frozen ground pork and sausage should be used within two months.

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Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

December 26, 1988
For immediate release

Getting more bang from your bucks
Seventh in a series

Planning for crop production in 1989 will be more enjoyable than it has been since the decade began, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Craig Edwards, a farm management economist, says producers will have more opportunity to find where investing cash operating capital will give them the best returns. It's to their advantage to continue looking for and finding places where a dollar spent will return more than a dollar within the year, he says.

"Budgeting for crop production is very important," says Edwards a specialist with the farm business management branch in Olds. "Cash invested or spent to grow crops in 1989 must return at least one dollar within the following year for each dollar spent in 1989, so cash operating capital will be available to seed the crops in 1990.

"If it doesn't work out that way, farm operators will have less cash for operating expenses in 1990 than they had for operating expenses in 1989, unless they are able to borrow or get money elsewhere."

The economist describes the following example: "If you're farming 1,000 cultivated acres and you expect cash expenses of $50 per acre in 1989 you'll want to get back more than $50,000 before you plant your 1990 crop.

"About $20,000 will probably be spent on machinery operating and maintenance costs and other costs that you can't change. The other $30,000 can be spent for crop inputs such as seed, fertilizer and other chemicals--that's where you're able to make a choice of resources to get the best return.

(Cont'd)

Getting more bang from your bucks (cont'd)

To find where the best returns can be expected in an operation, Edwards suggests, producers learn the concept of equal marginal returns and how to apply the principle to their own expected expenses and revenues.

Farmers wanting to participate in a comprehensive farm management course including planning for production should register for Alberta Agriculture's "Gear up Financially" course as soon as possible. Call any Alberta Agriculture district office for information and enjoy learning about production and financial planning this winter, he suggests.

For those not able to attend a course, assistance is available from district agriculturists and regional economists. The farm business management branch has some unpublished material available at Olds on making the best use of operating capital. For more information write Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0 or phone 556-4248.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

Editor's note: This is the final installment in a series of seven.